漫友精品图书系列

長歌行

CHANG GE XING

第六卷

编绘 夏达

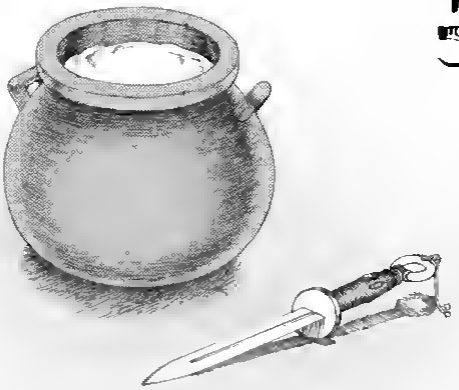
广东省出版集团
新世纪出版社

长歌行

CHAPTER 25

REBUILDING

（卷二十四）



WHAT!? ARE YOU SERIOUS!
YOU COULD NOT FIND HIM!?

WE FIRST LEARNED THAT HE WAS MISSING AFTER OUR GENERAL HAD INFORMED US OF OUR ORDERS
WE HAVE TRIED OUR BEST TO SEARCH THE SURROUNDINGS, BUT WE COULD NOT FIND HIM. WE HAVE STARTED LOOKING SOUTH AS WELL
THIS IS THE DAGGER THAT WAS FOUND IN HIS CARRIAGE, ON THE NIGHT IN QUESTION
WHO ELSE WAS INSIDE THE CARRIAGE AT THE TIME OF HIS DISSAPE-ARANCE?
THE WIFE OF THE STRATEGIST WAS THERE AS WELL
BUT SHE HAS ALSO DISSAP EARED

DON'T LIE TO US!
HIDE?
YOUR MASTER IS SOMEONE WHO IS CAPABLE OF SUBJUGATING THE 18 RIDERS OF YANYUN, INFRONT OF OUR VERY FACES
HOW COULD WE POSSIBLY HIDE SOMEONE LIKE THAT?
YOU PROMISED THAT HE WAS FREE!
THIS IS UNFAIR! I WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU FOR HIDING OUR LORD FROM US!
DO YOU PLAN ON USING HIM, AND THEN THROWING HIM AWAY!?
YOU WOULD CERTAINLY KNOW MORE ABOUT WHERE HE IS AT, THAN US, WOULD YOU NOT?
SO STOP WITH YOUR ACCUSATIONS!

TO HIDE OUR MASTER, WHILE HE IS STILL ALIVE
IT WOULD NOT BE SIMPLE, FOR THEM
STOP IT
OLD MAN!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
IT'S JUST AS HE SAID
.....
COULD I TAKE A LOOK AT [illegible] DAGGER
ALSO TAKE ME TO THE CARRIAGE HE WAS IN
AH?
OKAY

HMM. I DON'T GET IT
AT THIS POT
TAKE A LOOK
WHAT KIND OF PERSON WAS THE WIFE OF THE STRATEGIST, LIKE?

IT SMELLS LIKE THE STUFF THE UYGHUR DIP THEIR ARROWS IN
YES, IT IS POISON, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT
IT IS THE SAME SUBSTANCE THAT WAS ON THE DAGGER
SO, CAN YOU PLEASE ANSWER MY PPEVIOUS QUESTION?
.....
VERY WELL
THERE IS NO REASON IN HIDING IT, I SUPPOSE
MUJIN, TELL HIM ABOUT THE FEMALE SLAVES

ALL THE PEOPLE AROUND SUN, WERE SUBORDINATES OF THE GREAT KHAN, EVER SINCE HE WAS LITTLE
EVERYTHING HE SAID, EVERYTHING HE DID, WAS ALL REPORTED BACK TO THE GREAT KHAN
WHEN SUN WENT OUT TO WAR, HIS SUBORDINATES SLOWLY BUT SURELY STARTED TO BECOME PEOPLE WHO HE COULD TRUST, BUT
THE FEMALE SLAVES, WERE STILL SENT AND SUPPLISED BY THE GREAT KHAN
AT FIRST, AMONGST THE WOMEN, THEY BEGAN TO FORM GROUPS OF THEIR OWN AND WERE FIGHTING EACH OTHER
BUT EVENTUALLY, THEY BEGAN SCHEMING IN SECRET
AND THEN, SOME OF THE WOMEN THAT WERE SENT BY THE LESSER KHAN, BEGAN TO MIX IN WITH THE WOMEN THAT WERE SENT HERE, WHICH COMPLICATED THINGS
WE COULD NOT RETURN THE WOMEN, NOR COULD WE AFFORD TO KEEP THEM AT OUR SIDES
SO WE BEGAN DISTRIBUTING THEM AMONGST THOSE OF US WHO HAD DONE GREAT DEEDS IN BATTLE
AND SO,
TRAGEDY, STRUCK

IT WAS SOMETHING THAT WE HAD NOT THOUGHT, WAS POSSIBLE
WOMEN ARE SMALL AND FRAGILE ... YET THE POWER THEY HOLD, IS UNMEASURABLE
WE HAD OVER 10 INTERNAL DISPUTES, OVER THE WOMEN WHO WERE BROUGHT TO US
SO, WE DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST, TO JUST KILL THE SLAVE WOMEN THAT WERE SENT TO US
WAIT,
WHAT DOES ANY OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH US?
THE WIFE OF YOUR MASTER
WAS SOMEONE THAT YOUR MASTER, FORCEFULLY TOOK OFF OF OUR HANDS
WAS THAT WOMAN SENT FROM THE GREAT, OR LESSER KHAN?

WE DON'T KNOW
IF THE WOMAN WAS A SPY
THERE IS NO WAY THAT SHE COULD'VE LEAKED INFO OUT BY HERSELF
YOU SHOULD SPREAD AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE STRATEGIST WAS ABLE TO CAPTURE THE SPY, AND HAS COME BACK TO CAMP
IF YOU [illegible] PEOPLE YOU TRUST KEEP AN EYE OUT ON THE ROADS
HER ACCOMPLICE WILL SURELY REVEAL HIMSELF
.....
OLD MAN, WANNA MAKE A DEAL?
IF YOU HELP US OUT THIS TIME AROUND,
WE WILL HELP LOOK FOR YOUR MASTER

HMM...
I SUPPOSE, JUST THIS ONCE...
TSCH
COME NOW,
LET'S WORK TOGETHER, FROM NOW ON
觀雲流
A LI
A LI

FINALLY FOUND YOU
OUR MASTER WANTS YOU TO GO TO THE PLAINS SOUTH OF HEPE TO SUPERVISE
AND HAVE THE REFUGEES PLOW THE FIELDS
HERE, THIS IS THE MAP OF THE AREA
AND THE LIST OF NAMES OF THE REFUGEES
RIGHT AWAY?
YES

OKAY
AH, ...
UMM. ...
THEIR FOOD TASTES REALLY BAD, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO EAT IT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO
SO TAKE SOME STEAMED WHITE BREAD WITH YOU
OKAY
I'LL BE GOING NOW
AH, WAIT A MINUTE
UH.
YOU'RE FROM A RICH FAMILY, RIGHT?
THE REFUGEES ARE DIRTY AND A BIT RUDE, BUT DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY

HERE, TAKE THIS
THANK YOU
SIGH
I MADE IT BY CUTTING UP A MOSQUITO NET, IF YOU WANT, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE IT
.....
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND
SISTER

ARE YOU SURE THAT LETTING HER DO SUCH A ROUGH PIECE OF WORK, IS OKAY?
SHE'S SUCH A FRAGILE PERSON
YOU'RE LETTING A LI-SAN SUPERVISE THE CULTIVATION?
ISN'T THAT WHY YOU MADE HER A HAT, IN SECRET?
FOR SOMEONE WHO IS AS UNREFINED AS I AM, TO BE STUDYING LIKE THIS
BE SURE NOT TO SPILL ANY
HUH?
I WISH YOU HAD SENT ME INSTEAD
BUT I DON'T THINK THAT SHE WANTED TO GO

THERE IS NO FRAGILITY OR UNDEFINED THINGS, HERE AT THE LIU YUN TEMPLE
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!!
JUST BECOME THE BEST PERSON YOU CAN BE

GULP
WASH YOUR HANDS
AND TAKE THIS TO THE SISTER FROM THE LIU YUN TEMPLE
RIGHT!
DON'T HURRY, AND TAKE CARE OF YOUR SISTER, TOO
OKAY, JUST REST FOR NOW, MOTHER
WHEN I COME BACK, I'LL GO AND BRING MY BROTHER HIS LUNCH AS WELL

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SISTER..
I HAVE BROUGHT YOU SOME FOOD
.....
THANK YOU,
BUT I ALREADY ATE
SO PLEASE..
GIVE IT TO THAT CHILD, THERE, SHE SEEMS TO BE HUNGRY
THE BOWL IS CLEAN
MY MOTHER WASHED IT 5 TIMES, WITH HOT WATER
LI!
WIPE YOUR MOUTH!
03
03
03
I'M SO EMBARRASSED!!

CAN YOU SHOW ME WHAT FOOD THAT IS?
REMEMBER TO CHEW, PLENTY
BUT DON'T CHEW THE CHOPSTICKS
HERE
SLOWLY
WHAT IS THIS?
.....
BUT THE LITTLE CHILDREN, AREN'T ALLOWED TO EAT THIS?
WHAT'S THE OTHER HALF?
LEAFS, AND BRAN
.....
HALF OF IT IS RICE, SO YOU'LL GET A LOT OF ENERGY FROM IT!
IT'S RICE MIXED WITH VEGETABLES

.....
MY NAME IS A LI
WE DIDN'T WASTE ANY MONEY ON THIS, SO PLEASE, DO NOT GET ANGRY, SISTER
THIS IS ONLY GIVEN TO GUESTS AND THE ADULTS WHO ARE HELPING OUT WITH THE PLOWING AND CULTIVATION
EVEN IF YOU DON'T EAT IT WE'RE STILL NOT ALLOWED TO EAT IT OURSELVES
WHITE... STEAMED WHITE BREAD!?
HERE, TAKE THIS WITH YOU
IF... IF WE WERE TO TAKE THE SISTER'S FOOD AND EAT IT...
THE TEMPLE, ALSO TAUGHT US HOW TO LIVE
MY... MY MOTHER WAS SAVED THANKS TO THE LIU YUN TEMPLE

PLEASE, TAKE IT WITH YOU!
I WON'T GET ANGRY
AND, I'LL SAY IT AGAIN, BUT MY NAME IS A LI
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SISTER
IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE AT ALL, PLEASE, CALL ME
.....
?
STEAMED WHITE BREAD
SO THIS IS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
LI,
WANNA TRY SOME?

I'VE HAD THIS BEFORE
IS IT GOOD?
YEAH
BUT, ONLY ONE BITE
WE HAVE TO LEAVE THE REST FOR MOTHER AND BROTHER
BACK THEN, OUR FATHER WAS STILL ALIVE,
WE HAD A HOUSE, AND LAND
STEAMED WHITE BREAD IS TASTY
COULD YOU PLEASE GUIDE ME
LI, DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER'S FACES?
I CAN'T REMEMBER FATHERS FACE, ANYMORE

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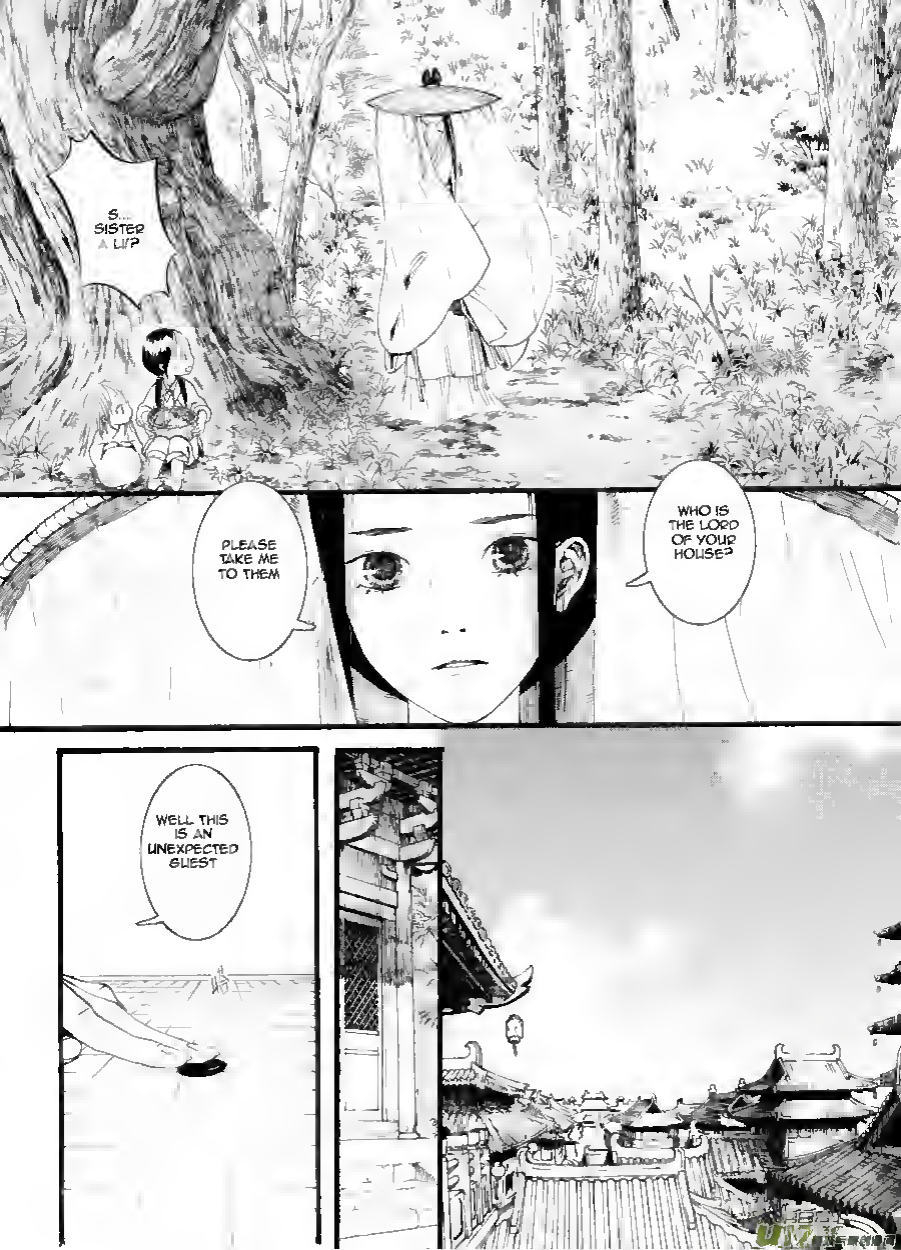

S... SISTER A LI?
WHO IS THE LORD OF YOUR HOUSE?
PLEASE TAKE ME TO THEM
WELL THIS IS AN UNEXPECTED GUEST

TO COME TO LUO YANG, LIKE THIS
DOES BEING THE GRAND SCRIBE TO HAN, GIVE YOU A LOT OF TIME ON YOUR HANDS?
I SUPPOSE TO SOMEONE WHO HAS MASTERED THE MYSTERIES OF THE WORLD, WOULD CONSIDER MY POSITION AS INSIGNIFICANT?
YOU ARE CERTAINLY NOT THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO WOULD WASTE THEIR TIME LIKE THIS
IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT LI CHUN FENG, WOULD LEAVE HIS WORK UNFINISHED AND COME TO LUO YANG LIKE THIS
SO I AM NOT ALLOWED EVEN A MOMENT OF ENTERTAINMENT AND JOY?

AND SO, WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
I HEARD THAT THE MASTER OF MEDICINES, IS HERE IN LUO YANG?
OH MY INFORMATION SURE DOES TRAVEL FAST SO WHAT IS IT THAT YOU NEED FROM THE MASTER OF MEDICINES?
NO NO, IT'S NOTHING...
I GUESS IT IS HARD TO COPY ANOTHER PERSONS DEMEANOR

SINCE I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY,
I SHALL BE CONVERSING WITH SOME OLD FRIENDS OF MINE
SO I SHALL BE STAYING HERE, FOR A WHILE
WE HAVE NOTHING BUT WOMEN, HERE
AH, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, YOU ARE LIKE MY MASTER, AND I, YOUR DISCIPLE
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT CAN'T BE HELPED
PLEASE USE THE GUEST ROOM OUTSIDE OF THIS PLACE
I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE YOU HELP OUT AT THE RECEPTION DESK
THOSE WHO DO NOT WORK, DO NOT GET ANYTHING TO EAT, AFTER ALL
.....

AIZEN HERE

AGAIN, MANY THANKS
TO PENGUIN FOR DOING
AN AMAZING JOB
AND FOR KYOKYO
FOR PROVIDING THE
RAWS FOR ME
TO TRANSLATE

I USED THE CHINESE
RAWS THIS TIME
AROUND, CAUSE
THE QUALITY IS
FAR BETTER.

ENJOY. :)

长歌行
（卷二十九）
编绘 夏达
助理 宝儿 阿至 董宇 包子
SummerZoo
夏天动工作室
长歌行
电子阅读平台

MOST OF US CAME HERE FROM THE NORTH
AFTER YEARS OF WAR, WE'VE LOST OUR LAND AND OUR LIVESTOCK AND IT'S NOT EASY TO MAKE A LIVING IN A NEW PLACE WITH NO FUNDS
IF NOT FOR LIU YUN TEMPLE, MOST OF US WOULD PROBABLY STARVE BEFORE SPRING
THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SINCE WE WERE ALL PREVIOUSLY FARMERS,
IF ALL GOES WELL AND WE HAVE A GOOD HARVEST,
WE'LL BE ABLE TO RETURN THE SEEDS THE TEMPLE HAS LOANED US BY NEXT YEAR
SINCE THE TEMPLE IS LENDING YOU RICE,
WHY DO YOU STILL EAT BRAN FOR YOUR MEALS?
EVERY MOUTHFUL OF RICE SAVED HELPS
IF THE HARVEST IS BAD WE'LL HAVE TO SURVIVE TILL THE FOLLOWING YEAR

SUCH A HARD LIFE...
PLEASE REASSURE THE MISTRESS...
WE WIL DEFINITELY RETURN THE SEEDS BY NEXT YEAR
.....
AH?
I'VE HEARD OF HOW FICKLE THE WEATHER CAN BE
AREN'T YOU CONSTANTLY FIGHTING AGAINST THE HEAVENS FOR YOUR VERY SURVIVAL?
THAT ISN'T TRUE
THE RAIN FROM THE SKY, THE CROPS FROM THE GROUND,
THESE ARE ALL BESTOWED UPON US BY THE HEAVENS

I SEE, SO THAT'S HOW IT IS

THERE IS STILL MUCH I DO NOT KNOW ABOUT GROWING CROPS.
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO GIVE ME MORE POINTERS IN THE FUTURE
YOUNG LADY YOU ARE TOO KIND!
YOU'RE FINALLY BACK
ANY LATER AND I HAVE HAVE SPARRED A LANTERN TO GO SEARCH FOR YOU
OH, DID YOU FINISH THE FOOD I PACKED?
THIS IS...
WHAT IS THIS?!!

A RABBIT I RAN INTO ON MY WAY BACK THAT I CAUGHT
I THOUGHT PERHAPS SISTER SI WOULD LIKE TO ADD IT TO OUR MEALS
IS THE MISTRESS BACK?
WHAT...DID YOU USE TO CATCH IT WITH?
THE MISTRESS SAYS WE HAVE A MALE GUEST IN THE OUTER COURTYARD
AH I ALMOST FORGOT
SHE'S BY THE POND
GOT IT
FOR THE TIME BEING LET'S ENTER AND LEAVE THROUGH THE BACKYARD

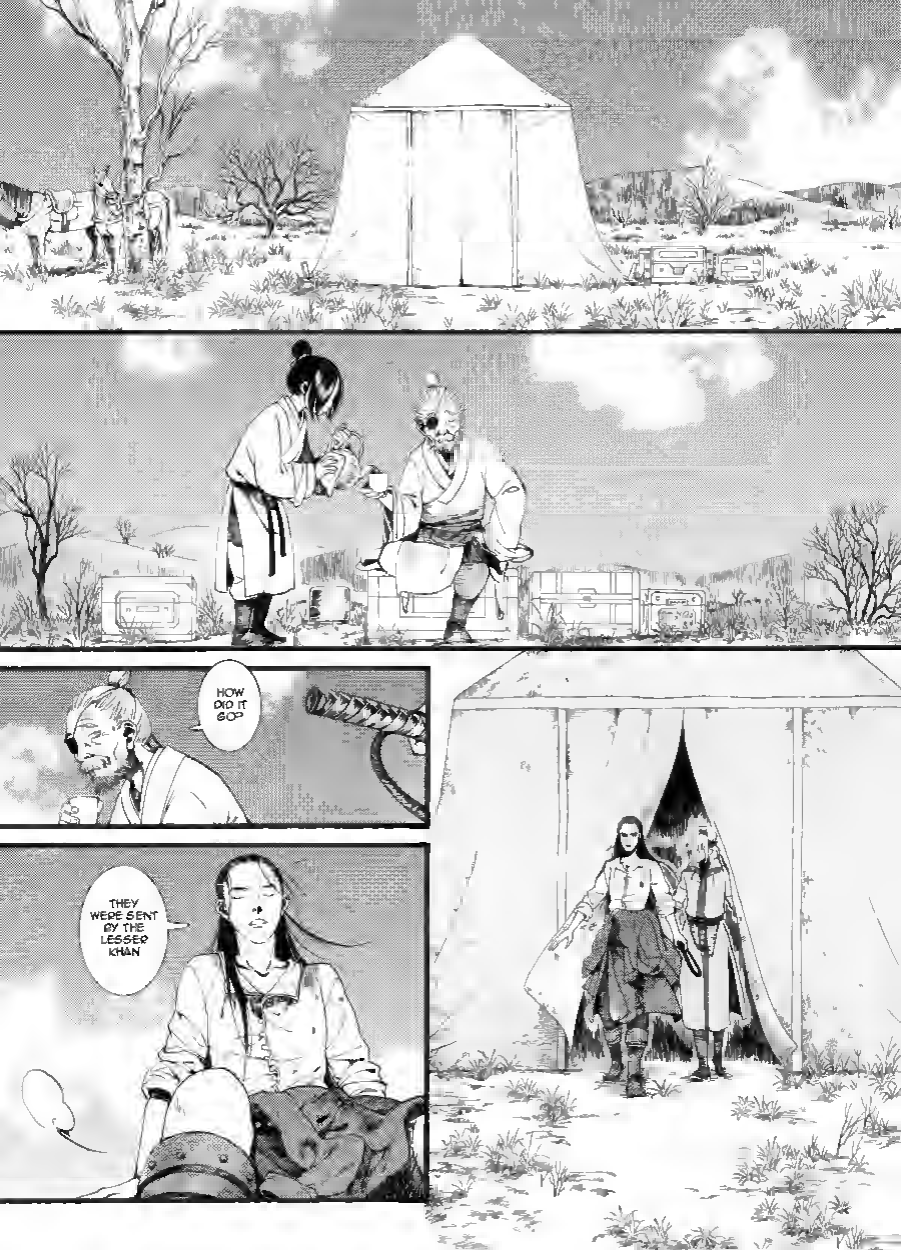
HONESTLY
A DELICATE YOUNG LADY LIKE HER,
I WONDER WHO SHE WAS BEFORE?

MISTRESS
BY SENDING ME TO SUPERVISE THE PLANTING, WAS YOUR WISH FOR ME TO HELP THOSE IN NEED
OR WAS YOUR WISH FOR ME TO PREVENT ANY UNRULY REFUGEES FROM CAUSING TROUBLE?
I ONLY REQUIRE THAT YOU SUPERVISE THE PLANTING
AND OVERSEE THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SEEDS

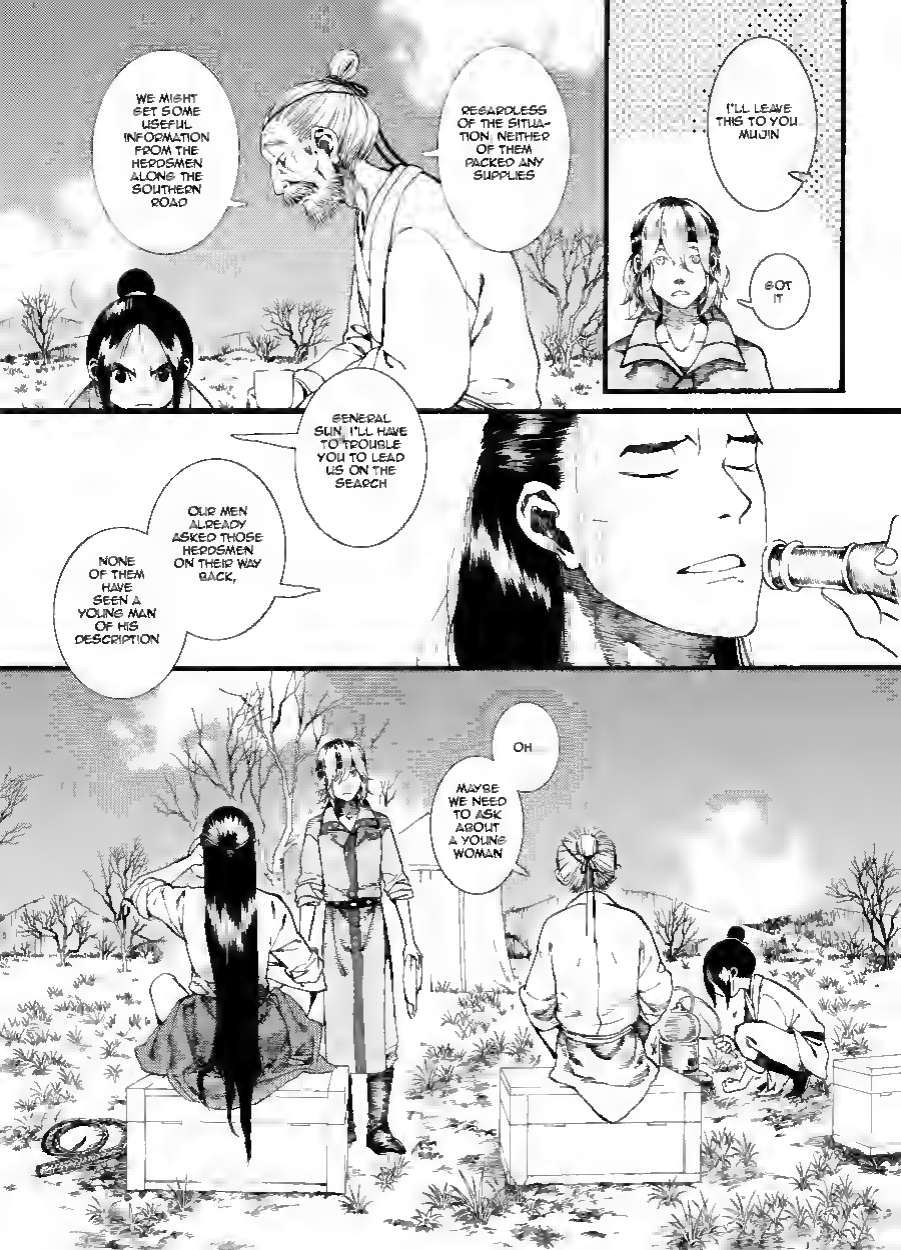
AS FOR THE REST,
THAT'S UP TO YOU
THERE IS NO WAY TO ASCERTAIN THE BACKGROUNDS OF THE REFUGEES WHICH IS WHY THE RICH HOUSEHOLDS FEAR TO HIRE THEM,
BUT THE MISTRESS NOT ONLY RENT OUT LANDS, BUT ALSO RICE SEEDS
JUDGING FROM YOUR ACTIONS,
YOU MUST BE FULLY CONFIDENT IN THE CHARACTER OF THE REFUGEES?
TO BE HONEST, NO
EH?

AH LI,
EVEN IF IT'S JUST A FISH IN MY POND, I CANNOT SAY I CAN PREDICT ITS EACH AND EVERY MOVE,
LET ALONE PEOPLE?
TO PLAN FOR EVERY SITUATION,
TO CALCULATE EVERY UNCERTAINTY
"PLANNING" AND "CALCULATION" ARE JUST SKILLS
THE BASIS BEHIND ALL THAT IS YOUR "PATH"
MISTRESS
OF WHAT DO YOU SPEAK OF WHEN YOU SAY "PATH"?

WITHOUT "FAITH"
BASING YOUR ACTIONS ONLY ON YOUR OWN FEELINGS... THE CONSEQUENCES ARE FULLY YOURS TO BEAR


HOW DID IT GO?
THEY WERE SENT BY THE LESSER KHAN

JUST AS YOU SUGGESTED, WE CAUGHT THE MEN IN CHARGE OF DELIVERING INFORMATION TO THAT WOMAN
BUT THEY KNOW NEXT TO NOTHING,
EVEN THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTERS THEY WERE DELIVERING ARE UNKNOWN TO THEM
IF THEY WEREN'T LYING
OUR TRAIL ENDS HERE
THREE OF THEM DIED DURING THE INTERROGATION,
THE REMAINING TWO CLAIM THAT THEY ALSO LOST CONTACT WITH HER,
WHICH WAS WHY THEY SO EAGERLY TOOK OUR BAIT
CONTINUE THE QUESTIONING
FIND OUT THE BACKGROUND DETAILS OF THAT WOMAN
ANY CLUES WOULD BE HELPFUL,
WE'LL USE THE MERCHANT CONVOYS TO DO THE SAME

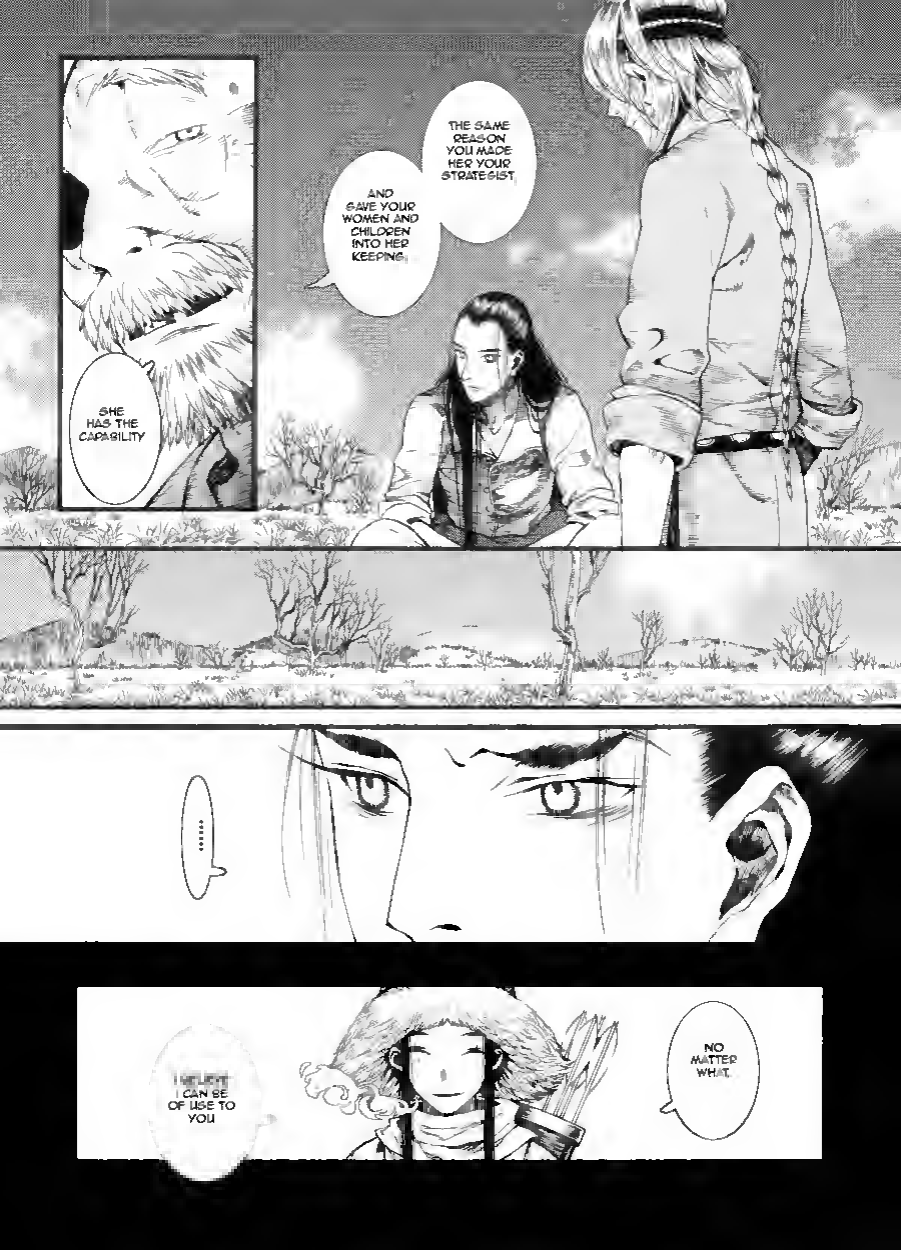

WE MIGHT GET SOME USEFUL INFORMATION FROM THE HERDSMEN ALONG THE SOUTHERN ROAD
REGARDLESS OF THE SITUATION, NEITHER OF THEM PACKED ANY SUPPLIES
I'LL LEAVE THIS TO YOU, MUJIN
GOT IT
GENERAL SUN, I'LL HAVE TO TROUBLE YOU TO LEAD US ON THE SEARCH
OUR MEN ALREADY ASKED THOSE HERDSMEN ON THEIR WAY BACK,
NONE OF THEM HAVE SEEN A YOUNG MAN OF HIS DESCRIPTION
OH
MAYBE WE NEED TO ASK ABOUT A YOUNG WOMAN

THIS OLD MAN ALMOST FORGOT,
WHAT?
THIS YOUNG MASTER OF OURS...
IS A YOUNG WOMAN
COUGH! COUGH!
COUGH!
咳
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!!
.....
COUGH
COUGH

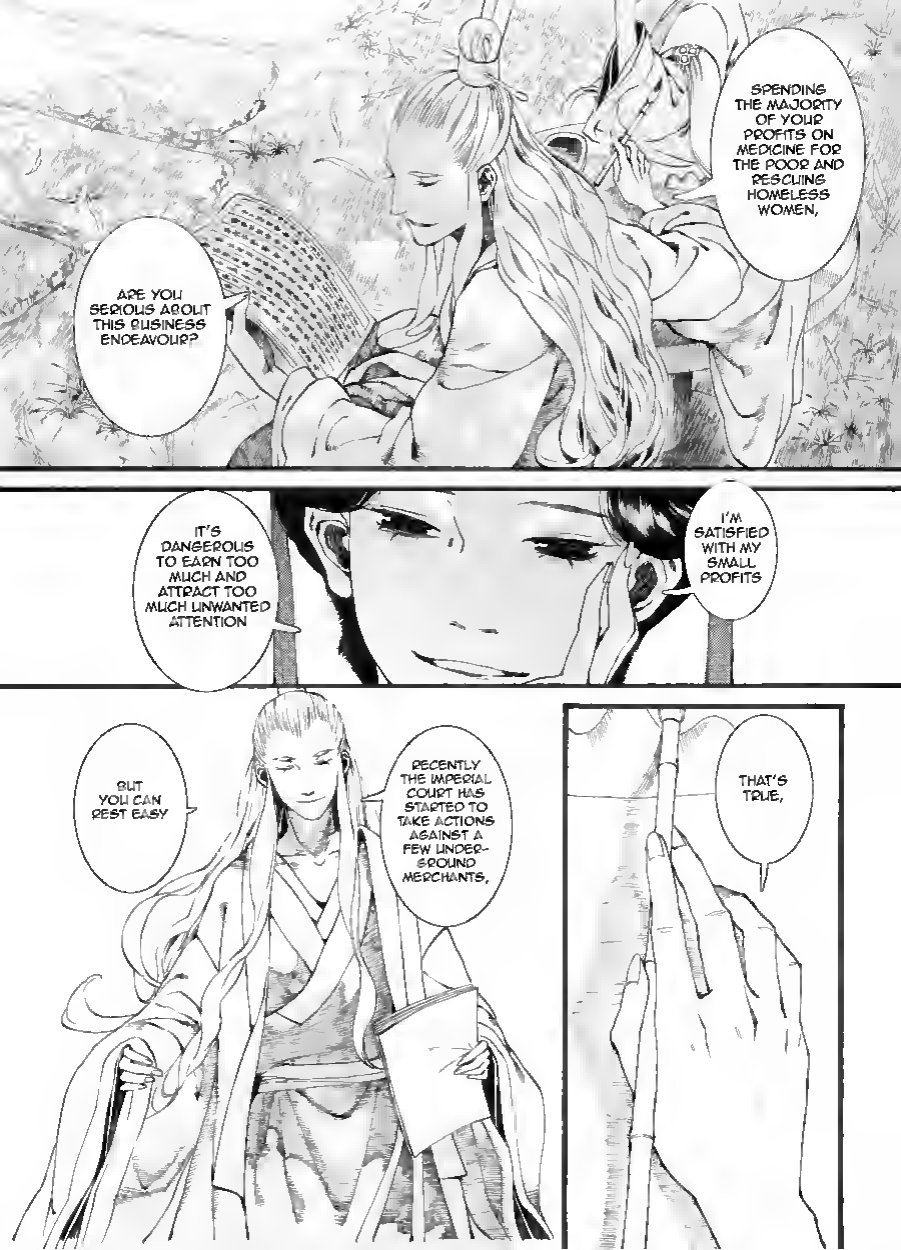
THAT'S NOT FUNNY!!
I'M NOT JOKING
IF IT WAS NOT TO AID THE SEARCH,
I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN WILLING TO REVEAL THIS
.....
YOU MEAN IT'S TRUE?
SHUO PROVINCE CAPTAIN, LI CHANGE,

ON BEHALF OF THE CITY.
SURRENDERING
HEY.
LET'S DRINK!
YOU ARE REALLY LIKE A GIRL, YOU KNOW?
WHATEVER YOU MAY THINK,
I TREAT YOU AS A BROTHER NOW
.....

I NEVER ACTUALLY THOUGHT HE WAS ACTUALLY A "SHE"
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A RESULT OF HIS YOUTH. BESIDES, HAN MALES ARE BORN WEAKER
ALTHOUGH I DID REALISE HOW DELICATE HE WAS, AND HOW HE ACTED KINDA WEIRD BEFORE...
ANYWAY,
WE HAVE TO SEARCH ALL OVER AGAIN
THWACK
YOU GUYS LOST IN BATTLE TO A WOMAN.
WEAK? HEH HEH
IF YOU'RE ASKING ABOUT HER BACKGROUND, THAT SHE'LL HAVE TO TELL YOU HERSELF
HER STORY IS NOT MINE TO REVEAL
IF YOU'RE ASKING ME WHY I FOLLOW HER,
WHY IS YOUR MASTER A WOMAN?


SHE HAS THE CAPABILITY
AND GAVE YOUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN INTO HER KEEPING.
THE SAME REASON YOU MADE HER YOUR STRATEGIST
.....
NO MATTER WHAT.
I WONDER IF I CAN BE OF USE TO YOU

ALRIGHT
MY DEAR,
THIS IS NOT HOW PEOPLE USUALLY CONDUCT THEIR BUSINESS
OH?


ARE YOU SERIOUS ABOUT THIS BUSINESS ENDEAVOUR?
SPENDING THE MAJORITY OF YOUR PROFITS ON MEDICINE FOR THE POOR AND RESCUING HOMELESS WOMEN,
I'M SATISFIED WITH MY SMALL PROFITS
IT'S DANGEROUS TO EARN TOO MUCH AND ATTRACT TOO MUCH UNWANTED ATTENTION
BUT YOU CAN REST EASY
RECENTLY THE IMPERIAL COURT HAS STARTED TO TAKE ACTIONS AGAINST A FEW UNDER-GROUND MERCHANTS,
THAT'S TRUE,

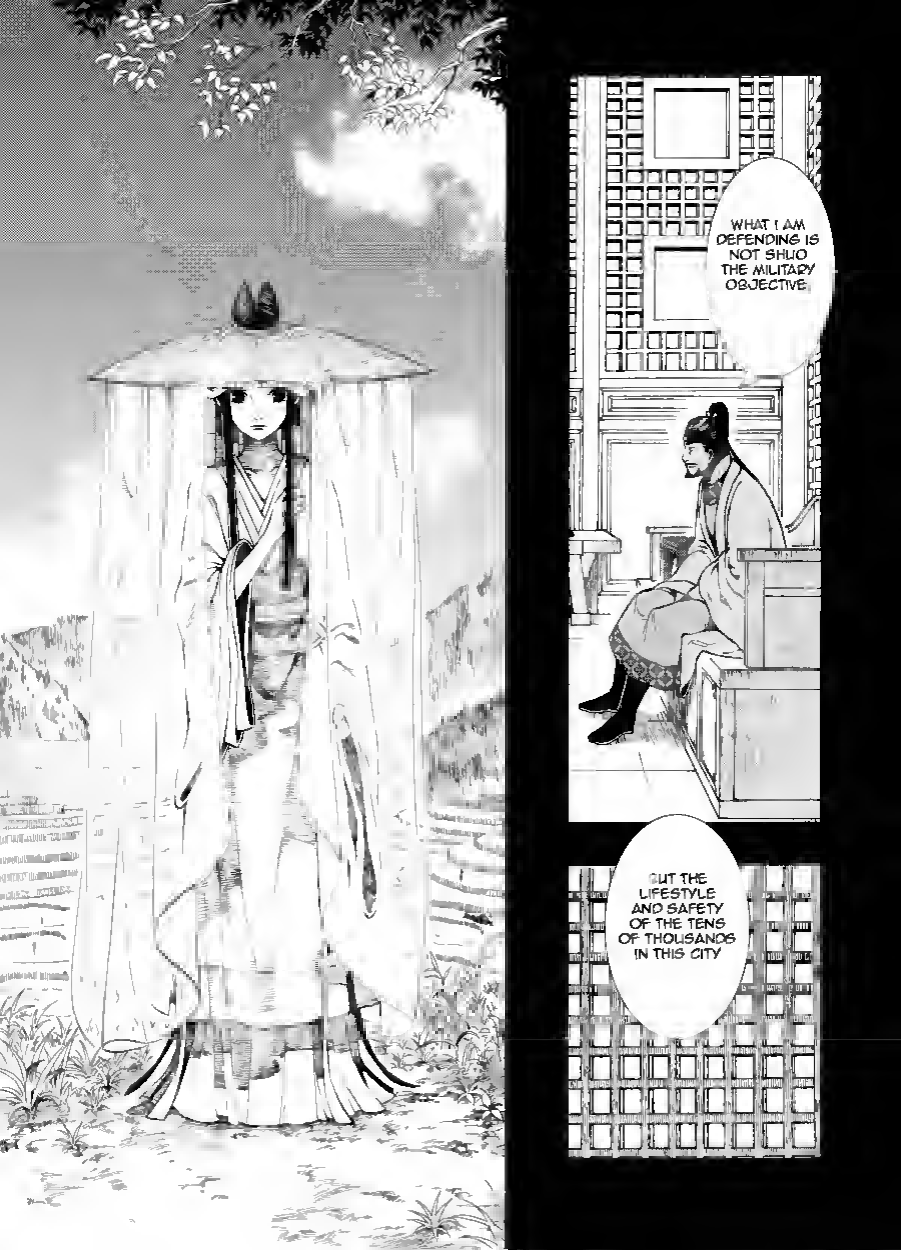
THE BORDER CONFLICTS MAKE THE SETTING UP OF MARKETS DIFFICULT SO IT MAY BE TOO HARSH TO TOTALLY CRACK DOWN ON UNDER-GROUND TRADE
HENCE WE ARE ONLY TARGETTING ARMED MERCHANTS WHO ENGAGE IN DIRTY DEALINGS
OH? WHY IS THAT?
YOU ARE NATURALLY NOT AT RISK
THAT IS CERTAINLY AN ACT OF BENEVOLENCE
HMM...

A PEACEFUL WORLD OF PLENTY
PERHAPS THIS BENEVOLENT GENTLEMAN CAN FULFILL YOUR WISH
WOW... SISTER AH LI,
YOU ARE INCREDIBLE!!
MOO

YOU REALLY MANAGED TO GET US A COW!!
THIS IS WHAT YOU MANAGED TO TRADE FOR WITH YOUR OWN HARD WORK,
TEN DAYS, I BELIEVE THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TIME
FIRST, SEND THE MEN-FOLK TO HELP OTHERS IN PLANTING THEIR FIELDS,
IN EXCHANGE FOR THEM LENDING US A COW AND PLOUGH THAT EVEN WOMEN CAN EASILY USE
BY THE TIME THE PLOUGHING IS DONE OVER HERE, THE ONES WHO WENT TO HELP WOULD RETURN JUST IN TIME FOR THE PLANTING, SO ZERO TIME IS WASTED
LET'S GET TO WORK!
AL-RIGHT!

WU NIANG, WE'LL FINISH THIS PIECE OF LAND BY TODAY.
I'LL LEAVE THE PREPARATION OF MEALS TO YOU AND YOUR MOTHER
YES!
SISTER AH LI, YOU'RE SO CLEVER!
IF YOU HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF THIS WE WOULD HAVE BEEN LATE FOR PLANTING
I ONLY BORROWED THE NAME OF LIU YUN TEMPLE TO NEGOTIATE,
THESE PAST FEW DAYS YOU HAVE REALLY TAUGHT ME MANY THINGS ABOUT GROWING CROPS
THAT'S SIMPLE STUFF,
I ONLY WISH I WAS AS KNOWLEDGEABLE AS SISTER
WHAT USE IS THAT?
IT'S VERY USEFUL!

WE WON'T BE AFRAID OF HAVING NO FOOD TO EAT THIS YEAR
WHY DO YOU THINK I AM DEFENDING SHUO PROVINCE?
AH JIU, WE NEED TO HURRY BACK,
IF LUNCH IS LATE EVERYONE WON'T HAVE ENOUGH STRENGTH TO WORK


WHAT I AM DEFENDING IS NOT SHUO THE MILITARY OBJECTIVE.
BUT THE LIFESTYLE AND SAFETY OF THE TENS OF THOUSANDS IN THIS CITY

CHOUKAKOU, VOL 5, CHAPTER 26

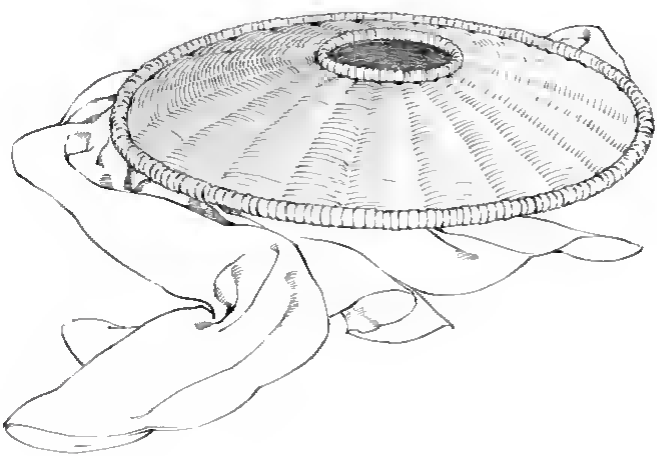
END

TRANSLATED BY: PENGUINSINTHEBASEMENT

长歌行

（卷二十七）

编绘 夏达
助理 宝龙 阿勇 包平



SIS, HOW LONG WILL YOU BE GONE THIS TIME ROUND?
ALL RIGHT, YOU SHOULD TURN BACK NOW.
OR ARE YOU GIRLS PLANNING TO WALK WITH ME ALL THE WAY TO THE BORDER?
SIS,
I PROMISE I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT
PROBABLY SIX TO TWELVE MONTHS
I'LL LEAVE LILYLIN TEMPLE IN YOUR HANDS
WHEN YOU WERE TRAVELING NEAR THE BORDER, DID YOU HEAR OF A CONVOY CALLED YANHANSMEN?
OH, YES, I THINK SO

SOME OF MY RELATIVES ARE IN THAT CONVOY,
IF YOU HAPPEN TO MEET THEM, CAN YOU HELP ME PASS THIS LETTER TO THEIR LEADER?
SIGH... CHILD,
HAVE YOU FINALLY UNDERSTOOD?
NO MATTER WHAT MANNER OF TRAGEDY BEFALLS YOU, AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE YOU HAVE TO FACE YOUR FUTURE
HIDING FROM THE WORLD WILL NEVER SOLVE ANYTHING
YES. EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE STILL MANY THINGS I AM CONFUSED ABOUT.
I JUST WANT TO LET THEM KNOW THAT I'M FINE
DON'T WORRY
I'LL DEFINITELY MAKE SURE THEY GET YOUR LETTER

I SAY,
WHY DIDN'T YOU CONTACT YOUR RELATIVES EARLIER?
WELL, I BEHAVED RATHER IRRESPONSIBLY IN THE PAST,
I FELT ASHAMED TO FACE THEM AGAIN
IF I WERE THEM I'LL HAVE BEEN WORRIED SICK!
SERIOUSLY,
IF MY PARENTS, MY BROTHERS, MY SISTERS..
ANY OF THEM SENT WORD THAT THEY ARE STILL ALIVE
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW RIDICULOUSLY HAPPY I'LL BE
SIGH, LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT THIS ANYMORE

SINCE WE'RE ALREADY CLOSE, WANT TO GO SHOPPING IN LUOYANG CITY?
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH WORK AT THE TEMPLE TODAY ANYWAY
DID YOU BRING ANY TRANSPORT FEES?
HERE, NO NEED TO THANK ME. JUST RETURN ME LATER
UMM...
EH?
LUOYANG CITY
WHY, YOU WILY LITTLE...
YOU FLATTER ME
YOU WERE PREPARED ALL ALONG!
AND YOU WERE JUST WAITING ME TO SUGGEST IT, WEREN'T YOU?
I WAS JUST PREPARING FOR UNEXPECTED EVENTS

HEY, WANT SOME CANDIES?
TWENTY COPPERS, THANKS
SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO TRY SOME?
I HEARD THAT THE IMPERIAL PALACE AT LUOYANG AS WELL AS MOST OF THE RESIDENCES WERE DESTROYED IN THE WAR
BUT LUOYANG STILL LOOKS SURPRISINGLY PROSPEROUS
OH, THE MISTRESS MENTIONED THAT AFTER FARMERS WERE PERMITTED TO CULTIVATE LAND PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY THE IMPERIAL GARDENS,
EVERYTHING STARTED TO GET BETTER

THE YANG EMPEROR SPARED NO EXPENSE IN THE BUILDING OF THE LUOYANG PALACE,
EVEN THE PILLARS REQUIRED THE COMBINED STRENGTH OF TWO THOUSAND MEN TO MOVE
AND ALL IT TOOK WAS A FIRE TO TURN IT ALL INTO ASHES
THEN WHY DON'T YOU TALK ABOUT THE EFFORT IN RAISING SOMEONE FOR DECADES,
ALL PUT TO WASTE BY A SINGLE SLASH ON THE BATTLEFIELD
EMPERORS GO THROUGH VICTORIES AND DEFEATS,
BUT THE PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS BE ON THE LOSING END
HAHA,
INDEED
OH?
INTERESTING,

LASS, THAT WAS PLEASING TO MY EARS
JOIN US FOR A CUP?
WAITER, ANOTHER FLASK OF WINE!
EH?
VERY WELL
RELAX, IT'LL BE FINE
HEY

I HAVE SHOWN THE SEAL TO THE INSPECTOR OF LUOYANG. THE GUARDSMEN ARE NOW OURS TO COMMAND
THE MERCHANT GROUP CHIN, WITH INFLUENCE IN THIRTEEN PROVINCES AND TWO TRADE ROUTES,
THEY HAVE ALWAYS HAD CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE TURKS, AND ARE BEHIND COUNTLESS KILLINGS
RECENTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN GOODS WITHIN THEIR MERCHANDISE WITH THE SEAL MARK OF THE MAGISTRATE'S VAULT
MY LORD, DO YOU WISH TO TAKE COMMAND AT THE INSPECTOR'S RESIDENCE?
THEY DARE TO SHOW THEMSELVES IN LUOYANG DESPITE KNOWING THEY ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION
WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE SOURCE OF THEIR CONFIDENCE?

MY LORD, YOU SUSPECT THEY ARE COLLUDING WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS?
PERHAPS, BUT I DON'T WISH TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS WITHOUT ANY HARD EVIDENCE
I WANT AS LITTLE PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE TO KNOW OF MY PRESENCE IN LUOYANG
YES, MY LORD
MY NAME IS SITU LANGLANG, CURRENTLY IN CHARGE OF ESCORTING OLD MAN SUN HERE TO LUOYANG,
HOW MAY I ADDRESS THE TWO OF YOU?
WHERE IS THAT PLACE AGAIN?
LILYUN TEMPLE. IT'S SLIGHTLY EAST OF LUOYANG CITY
MY LORD, ARE YOU INTENDING TO MEET LORD LI?
MIGHT AS WELL. IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN CONCEAL MYSELF FROM HIM ANYWAY

AH LI
SURNAME WANG AH QI
A CITY THAT HAS BEEN AROUND FOR EIGHT DYNASTIES IS INDEED EXTRAORDINARY,
EVEN NOBLE YOUNG LADIES STROLLING ON THE STREETS HAVE SUCH INSIGHT,
WHAT A SURPRISE
IF YOU ARE BOLD ENOUGH TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION FROM TWO COMPLETE STRANGERS FOR DRINKS
YOU MUST HAVE SOME TRICKS UP YOUR SLEEVE, YES?
!
PLEASE DO NOT BE MISTAKEN. I AM NOT FROM A NOBLE HOUSE. THIS VEIL IS JUST A FRIEND'S GOOD INTENTIONS
BESIDES, IF MEN AND WOMEN WERE NOT EDUCATED DIFFERENTLY, WHAT WOULD BE THEIR DIFFERENCE?

07
NOT BAD, NOT BAD.
ELEGANT FEATURES DELICATE BONE STRUCTURE
INSOLENCE!
GOOD DISCIPLE,

WILL YOU ACCEPT ME AS YOUR MASTER?
CRASH!
IT'S ALMOST NOON
I WONDER WHAT'S HOLDING MASTER UP

WHEN WILL THE GUEST YOU'RE ASKING MY MASTER TO TREAT ARRIVE?
HE'LL PROBABLY STILL TAKE A FEW DAYS, IT DOESN'T MATTER
WITH SITU LANGLANG ESCORTING
NOTHING UNTOWARD WILL HAPPEN
NOT BAD, NOT BAD
HAPLESS AT FIRST SIGHT, FEARSOME WHEN PROVOKED
EXACTLY WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR IN A DISCIPLE

THIS IS THE EIGHTH ONE YOU'VE FRIGHTENED AWAY SO FAR
SEEMS LIKE MY LONG AND PAINFUL SEARCH WAS WORTH IT
THE MONEY FOR THE CUPS AND PLATES TOO
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW HARD IT IS TO FIND SOMEONE LIKE THAT?
A YOUNG PERSON WITH THE PROPER CHARACTER, PERSONALITY AND TALENT.
HOW ANNOYING
SIGH
FATE, TOO IS CRUCIAL YOU KNOW

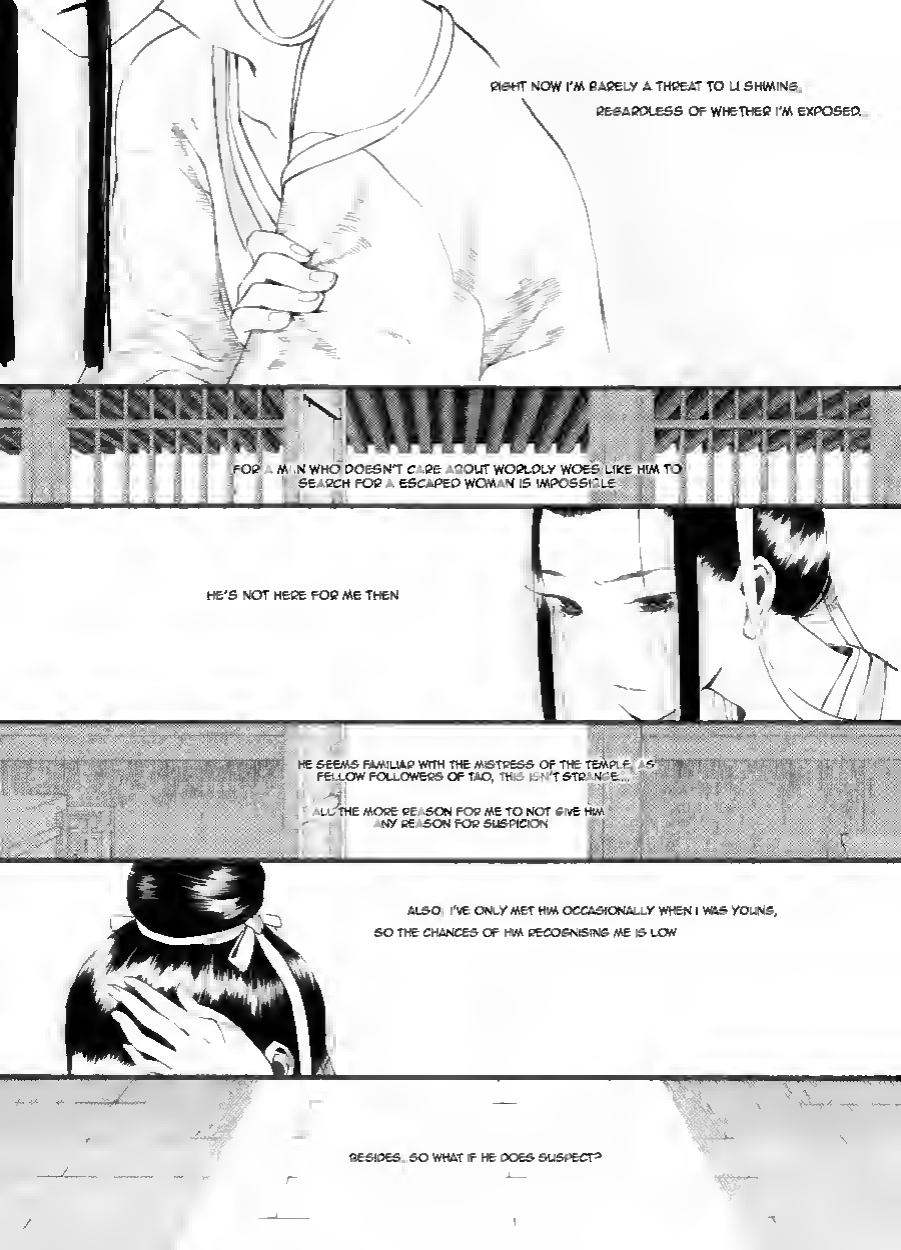
A RARE CHANCE FOR US TO ENJOY LUOYANG RUINED BY THAT BASTARD
NOT LIKE I DIDN'T TRY
IF I WERE YOU, I WOULD HAVE SPLASHED HIM IN THE FACE
SOMEHOW I WASN'T EVEN ABLE TO CATCH HOW HE DODGED THE WINE. I HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE
EVEN THE VEIL HAS BEEN STAINED BY WINE...
LET ME WASH IT AND THEN I'LL RETURN IT TO YOU
MIS-TRESS
MIS-TRESS
U-CK?

I'LL LIKE HIM TO HAVE A LOOK AT YOU
YOUR ILLNESS MAY HAVE CAUSED MORE DAMAGE TO YOUR BODY THAN IS READILY APPARENT,
AH LI COME TO THE FRONT COURTYARD LATER TO WELCOME MY MASTER WITH ME
AH LI IS GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
THEN I WILL BRING HER TO PREPARE HERSELF IMMEDIATELY!
EH?
QUICK! QUICK!

MISTRESS' MASTER IS AN OLD IMMORTAL
FROM WHAT I HEARD FROM SIS.
BEFORE, THE MISTRESS WAS AFRAID THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE A RELAPSE WHEN THE COLD SEASONS ARRIVE.
WE DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW
AH LI?
EH?
YOUR FACE! IT'S SO PALE!
WHAT'S WRONG?
I'M FINE JUST A LITTLE TIRED
ARE YOU SURE?

THAT PERSON...

WAS LI CHUNFENG!


RIGHT NOW I'M BARELY A THREAT TO LI SHWANG.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I'M EXPOSED.
FOR A MAN WHO DOESN'T CARE ABOUT WORLDLY WOES LIKE HIM TO SEARCH FOR A ESCAPED WOMAN IS IMPOSSIBLE
HE'S NOT HERE FOR ME THEN
HE SEEMS FAMILIAR WITH THE MISTRESS OF THE TEMPLE, AS FELLOW FOLLOWERS OF TAO, THIS ISN'T STRANGE...
ALL THE MORE REASON FOR ME TO NOT GIVE HIM ANY REASON FOR SUSPICION
ALSO, I'VE ONLY MET HIM OCCASIONALLY WHEN I WAS YOUNG, SO THE CHANCES OF HIM RECOGNISING ME IS LOW
BESIDES, SO WHAT IF HE DOES SUSPECT?

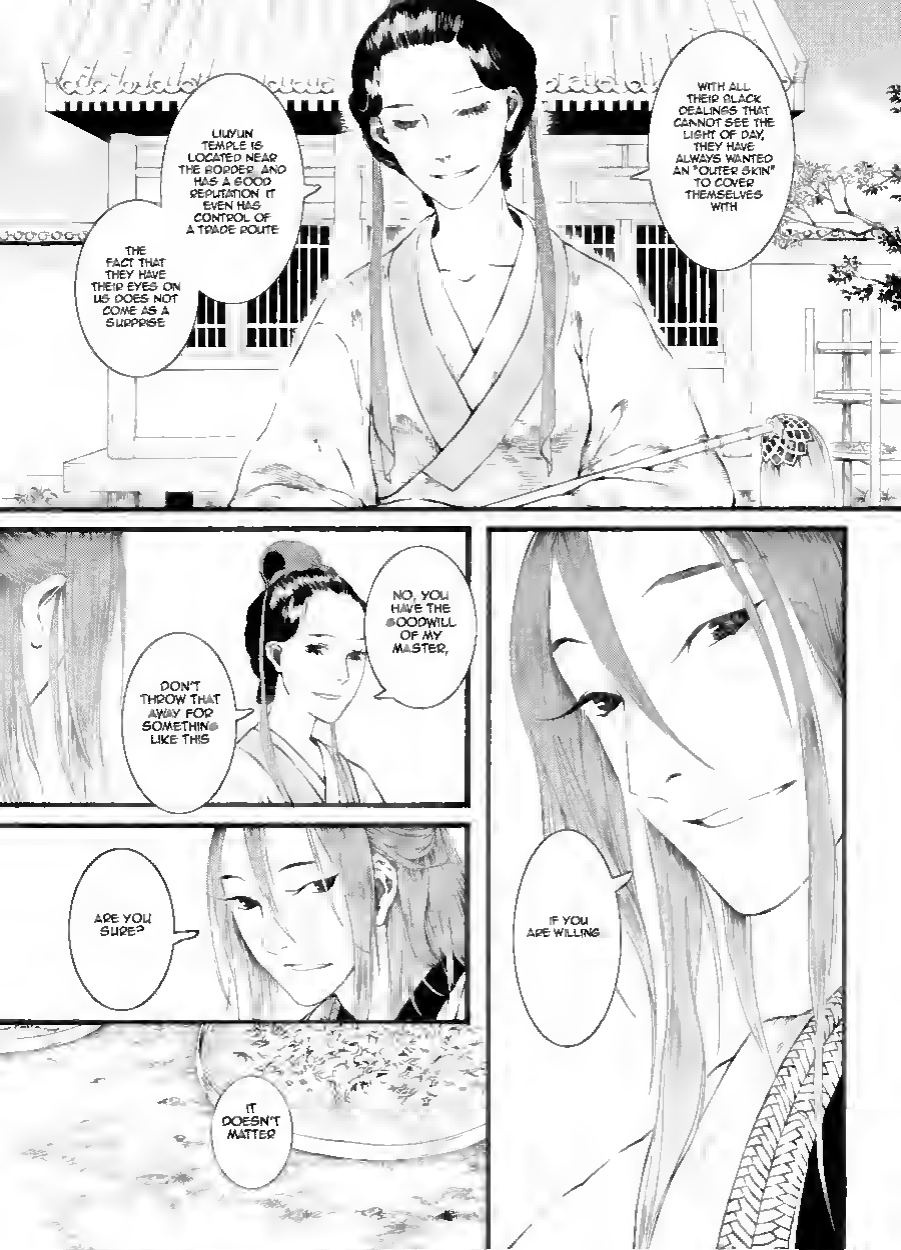
FEEL ANY BETTER?
YES, THANK YOU
THAT'S GOOD
GO WASH YOUR FACE
I SOAKED SOME HERBS IN THE WATER SO IT'S MORE REFRESHING
THANK YOU, SIS
AM I GOING TO LET MYSELF BE CAPTURED WITHOUT A FIGHT?

AH! AT LAST I CAN REST UNDER A PROPER ROOF
MR SITU, IT'S BEEN HARD ON YOU
THE OLD MAN'S HEART IS TOO KIND
NOT CARING WHETHER HE TREATS THE RICH OR POOR, HE SOMETIMES HELPS THEM PAY FOR THEIR MEDICINE
WHEN THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH MEDICINAL HERBS HE EVEN GOES AND LOOK FOR THEM HIMSELF

EVEN THE SICK BEASTS HE MET ON THE WAY HERE HE WOULD TREAT
TO BE UNCARING OF HIS PATIENT'S STATION IN LIFE, HIS AGE, HIS BACK-GROUND AND TO TREAT EVEYONE IN THIS WORLD AS HIS CLOSE FRIEND AND RELATIVE,
I STILL HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO LEARN COMPARED WITH HIM
OH YES,
WHAT DID LI CHUNFENG WANT THE OLD MAN FOR?
HE DION'T MENTION ANY SPECIFICS.
IT SEEMS THAT THE CURRENT EMPEROR IS AN ADMIROR OF HIS. AND WISHES HIM TO ENGAGE IN COURT AFFAIRS
OH? SO HE'S SUPPOSED TO PERSUADE THE OLD MAN?

HE HAS GOOD INTENTIONS THEN?
THE OLD MAN WILL NEVER GO THOUGH
I'M GUESSING THAT HE HEARD OF THIS AND CAME HERE TO INFORM US
PROBABLY NOT
LI CHUNFENG PROBABLY BEARS US NO ILL WILL,
IF HE DOES, I CANNOT DETECT IT
HE PROBABLY DOES NOT EVEN CONSIDER HIS YEARS IN THIS WORLD OF ANY SIGNIFICANCE COMPARED TO THE SPAN OF AGES
IN HIS HEART NUMEROLOGY AS WELL AS ASTROLOGY ARE MEASURED ON THE THOUSAND YEAR SCALE,
THAT'S WHAT I DISLIKE THE MOST ABOUT HIM

SIGH
I ALMOST FORGOT WHAT I CAME HERE FOR
DO YOU STILL REMEMBER "CHIN"?
THE PATHS THAT THE TWO OF YOU FOLLOW,
THIS TAOIST FEELS THAT THERE ARE MERITS IN BOTH
I HAVE SOME FRIENDS WHO TRACED THEM TO LIUYANG
A FEW YEARS BACK THEY TRIED TO RILY LILYUN TEMPLE BUT WAS MET WITH YOUR REFUSAL,
THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE GIVEN UP ON THAT IDEA


LIUYUN TEMPLE IS LOCATED NEAR THE BORDER AND HAS A GOOD REPUTATION IT EVEN HAS CONTROL OF A TRADE ROUTE
THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE THEIR EYES ON US DOES NOT COME AS A SURPRISE
WITH ALL THEIR BLACK DEALINGS THAT CANNOT SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY, THEY HAVE ALWAYS WANTED AN "OUTER SKIN" TO COVER THEMSELVES WITH
NO, YOU HAVE THE GOODWILL OF MY MASTER,
DON'T THROW THAT AWAY FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS
ARE YOU SURE?
IT DOESN'T MATTER
IF YOU ARE WILLING

YOU AND I JUST NEED TO BE PATIENT SO ON AS PER NORMAL,
ACCORDING TO CHUNFENG, THE IMPERIAL COURT HAS BEEN EYEING THESE MERCHANT CONVOYS LATELY.
IF THAT'S THE CASE...
AND SOON CHIN WILL BARELY HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO KEEP ITSELF AFLOAT, LET ALONE COME AFTER LIUYUN TEMPLE
SIGH
YOU ARE WAY TOO CAREFUL

CHOUKAKOU, VOL 5, CHAPTER 27

END

TRANSLATED BY: PENGUINSINTHEBASEMENT

SONG OF THE LONG MARCH

< CHAPTER 28 >

AUTHOR: XIA DA

MASTER SUN?
MISTRESS, IS YOUR TEACHER THE ONE WIDELY KNOWN AS THE "KING OF MEDICINES", SUN SIMIAO?
OH? HAVE YOU HEARD OF HIM?
HIS DEEDS, SAVING COUNTLESS LIVES FROM SO MANY ILLNESSES, ARE REKNOWNED THROUGHOUT THE LAND.
BACK WHEN I WAS YOUNG, MY TEACHERS WOULD OFTEN SPEAK OF HIM WITH GREAT RESPECT, I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE THE DAY WHEN I COULD FINALLY MEET HIM IN PERSON.
EVEN LESS THAT YOU WERE HIS ESTEEMED PUPIL.
TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE OF MEDICINE IS VAST AND WIDE. I HAVE LEARNED BUT A FRACTION OF HIS SKILLS.
TEACHER ALSO COMES AND GOES AS HE PLEASES, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD OFTEN COME BY AND GIVES ME POINTERS WHENEVER HE PASSES BY LUOYANG.
SO, YOU ARE INDEED FORTUNATE.

T/N: PUN INTENDED
MY TEACHER HAS AN EASY-GOING* PERSONALITY,
SO THERE IS NO NEED TO BE OVERLY FORMAL WITH HIM, JUST PAY HIM THE SAME RESPECT YOU WOULD TO ANYONE ELDER.
YES.
THANK YOU FOR INTRODUCING ME.
.....

自慎堂
HALL OF SELF DILIGENCE
COME ON IN
TEACHER,
I HAVE BROUGHT YOU MY LITTLE FRIEND I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT.
EH?

SEEMS FATED TO RUN INTO MY OLD SELF.
THIS LITTLE FRIEND OF YOURS,
MASTER SUN?
MASTER...
I WILL ACCEPT ANY PUNISHMENT.
AND CAUSED GREAT OFFENCE,
ENOUGH WITH THE FORMALITIES, COME IN.
HAHA, WHAT GREAT OFFENCE?
HAVE YOU TWO MET?
AH LI WAS RUDE AND IGNORANT,

MORE AND MORE, SITU HAS WANTED TO FIND A SUITABLE DISCIPLE, AND SO HE ACTED RASHLY. PLEASE DON'T TAKE HIS BRASHNESS TO HEART.
I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO APOLOGIZE.
AH LI WOULD NOT DARE.
SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED...
SITU LANGLANG IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE IMPUDENT.
.....
LITTLE FRIEND, HAVE YOU PRACTISED MARTIAL ARTS BEFORE?
I HAVE...
I LEARNED A TRICK OR TWO FROM MY ELDERS WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.
NOT ONLY DID YOU NOT EASE YOUR BODY AND MIND, YOU EXAUSTED YOURSELF BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY, TO THE POINT OF COUGHING BLOOD ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS IN THE PAST, AM I RIGHT?
YOU WERE OVERCONFIDENT ABOUT YOUR RESILIENCE, AND IGNORED THE EARLY SIGNS OF CHILL INVADING YOUR INTERNAL ORGANS. THIS CAUSED YOUR SITUATION TO WORSEN.

IF YOU ARE UNWILLING TO TAKE PROPER CARE OF YOUR OWN BODY, I'M AFRAID EVEN A DEITY WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO KEEP YOU ALIVE
A SENSIBLE PERSON WOULD TAKE CARE OF ONE SELF.
.....
YES.
YOUR COUGH HAS BECOME MORE PERSISTENT. YOU MAY BE ABLE TO SUPPRESS IT FOR A FEW YEARS,
BUT IF YOU DON'T TAKE PROPER CARE OF IT NOW, BY THE TIME YOUR CONDITION WORSENS, IT WOULD BE TOO LATE.
...HER CONDITION IS MUCH MORE SERIOUS THAN I EXPECTED.
I'LL WRITE YOU A FEW PRESCRIPTIONS FOR YOUR CHILL. TAKE THEM FOUR TIMES A DAY. IT WILL SUPRESS YOUR COUGH, CLEAR YOUR AIR WAY AND PREVENT ANY RELAPSES.
THE ONLY RECOURSE IS FOR YOU TO START TAKING PROPER CARE OF YOUR BODY FROM NOW ON
REMEMBER, AVOID EXHAUSTING YOURSELF ABOVE ALL ELSE

EVEN THOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH IN YOUR PAST,
STILL, I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO LET GO WHATEVER IT IS THAT IS TROUBLING YOU...
TO CARRY SUCH A BURDEN ON YOUR MIND AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE ...IS DEFINITELY NOT THE PATH TO LONGEVITY.
FROM NOW ON, TRY NOT TO OVERLYEXERT YOURSELF.
YES.
MIS-TRESS.
YES.
YOU'VE HEARD WHAT MY TEACHER SAID,
HOW DID IT GO?
WHAT DID THE ELDER SAY?
MASTER SUN WAS AS SKILLED AS THE RUMORS SAY,
WITH HIS PRESCRIPTIONS, I SHOULD RECOVER IN NO TIME.
AH LI,
OF COURSE YOU CAN,
BUT IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT SITU LANGLANG, THEN IT WON'T BE NECESSARY.
I WOULD LIKE TO STAY AT THE RANCH SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN FOR A WHILE, TILL THE FARMWORK IS COMPLETED
MISTRESS, WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF VISITORS COMING TO THE TEMPLE LATELY, IT HAS BECOME INCONVENIENT FOR ME TO COME HERE.

IN LIUYUN TEMPLE, HOWEVER, HE WON'T DARE TO ACT UP.
HIS TEACHER PASSED ON MANY YEARS AGO, AND HE WAS HER SOLE DISCIPLE. TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF HER TEACHINGS, HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO FIND A SUITABLE DISCIPLE EVER SINCE
HE IS THE SUCCESSOR OF THE YUENU SWORD STYLE, WHICH BY TRADITION IS HEADED BY A WOMAN,
SITU LANGLANG IS A MASTER SWORDSMAN?
THEN BECOMING HIS DISCIPLE DOESN'T SOUND SO BAD.
SO THAT'S HOW IT WAS.
IF YOU'D BECOME HIS STUDENT, YOU WOULD HAVE TO JOIN MY TEACHER IN HIS TRAVELS ALL OVER THE LAND.
AND SO WHEN MY TEACHER CURED HIS, THE ELDER SU NI, HE PLEDGED HIS SWORD IN MY MASTER'S SERVICE. IT HAS BEEN OVER TEN YEARS BY NOW.
BACK WHEN HE WAS YOUNG, HE MADE A VOW TO PLEDGE TWENTY YEARS OF HIS SERVICE TO WHOMEVER SAVES HIS TEACHER.
HOW OLD IS HE NOW?
OVER TEN YEARS?

WAIT A SECOND, I HEARD THAT HE HAS ALREADY PAST EIGHTY ..
AH,
THEN THE OLD MAN HE ACCOMPANIES MUST BE YOUR TEACHER?
HE IS WELL INTO HIS THIRTIES.
WHAT?!
Maybe it's best not to ask about her age....
THAT S RIGHT.
THANK YOU FOR EXPLAINING IT TO ME, IT HAS INDEED RELIEVED MANY OF MY WORRIES.
BUT I STILL BELIEVE IT S FOR THE BEST IF I BE THERE FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS OF PLANTING
VERY WELL, THEN I'LL LEAVE IT IN YOUR HANDS.
SHE S TOTALLY IGNORING ALL OUR ADVICE ...
THIS CHILD WHAT IS SHE PLANNING NOW?

Priestess,
May I have a word?

A STRANGER AROUND THESE PARTS? HAVEN'T SEEN ANY HORSE OR FOOD MISSING? HAVEN'T NOTICED
THERE WAS A HAN MERCHANT CONVOY PASSING THROUGH SOME TIME AGO HOWEVER, AND THEY STOLE MY WOMAN.
ARE YOU GOING TO HANDLE THAT?
STRANGERS? HAVEN T SEEN ANY LIVESTOCKS ARE ALL ACCOUNTED FOR TOO.
MERCHANT CONVOY? ONLY ONE HAS PASSED THROUGH HERE LAST SIX MONTHS, AND IT WAS A HAN CONVOY.
WE DO HAVE A FEW HORSES MISSING...
YOU OLD FOOL,
DIDN'T YOU TRADE THEM TO THE CONVOY FOR SALT AND CLOTH?
STRANGERS? NOPE.
NO MISSING HORSES EITHER.
HAN CONVOY...
.....

SIGH.
THIS,
IS ALL THE INTEL WE'VE MANAGED TO COLLECT.
HER HORSE HAS ALREADY RETURNED ON ITS OWN, AND NONE OF THE HERDERS ARE MISSING HORSES,
IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT SHE LEFT HERE WITH A MERCHANT CONVOY.
AH DOU, WHICH ONE OF THE HAN CONVOYS HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN THIS AREA IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS?
THERE ARE CHI NI, QIN DENG GE AND LUO CHUAN.
QIN DENG GE JUST PASSED THE BORDER HALF A MONTH AGO, TIME-WISE, IT DOESN'T ADD UP.
JUDGING FROM HOW THEY DID THINGS, MY BET IS ON LUO CHUAN.

IF ANY CAPTURED HAN WOMAN WAS TO REQUEST FOR THEIR AID, THEY WOULD DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO RETURN THEM HOME.
LUO CHUAN IS A MERCHANT CONVOY FROM A TAOIST TEMPLE. THEY HAVE ALWAYS KEPT A LOW PROFILE AND THEIR TRADES ARE NOTHING SPECTACULAR EITHER
BUT THEY HAVE ONE SPECIAL RULE.
IF SO,
DID THEY MISTAKE LI CHANGGE FOR ONE OF THE CAPTURED "WOMEN" AND "RESCUED" HER?
.....
YES!
AH DOU, CONTACT XU FENG, WE WILL BEGIN OUR SEARCH WITH THE TWO CONVOYS.
WHAT KIND OF THREAT WOULD RENDER OUR MASTER UNABLE TO CONTACT US?
I CAN'T HELP BUT FIND IT STRANGE...
THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE WHAT HAPPENED.
IT IS JUST A WILD GUESS BY THIS OLD MAN...

AT THE VERY LEAST, WE HAVE FOUND CLUES OF HER WHEREABOUTS NOW.
SO ARE WE HEADING TOWARDS THE HAN BORDER NOW? OUT OF THE GENERAL AND ME, ONLY ONE OF US CAN GO. THE OTHER MUST REMAIN HERE AT THE CAMP
IT'S FINE.
AS LONG AS THE ONE WHO STAYS CAN HANDLE THE DAILY MATTERS AND DEAL WITH GREAT KHAN'S INQUIRIES
I'LL STAY, LET THE GENERAL GO.
ONCE WE HAVE FOUND HER, YOU WILL ESCORT ME TO KHITAN USING YOUR TRADE ROUTE.
VERY WELL.
AS PER OUR AGREEMENT,
REST ASSURED.
I'LL KEEP MY WORD.
PLEASE START MAKING YOUR PREP-ARATIONS.

WHAT?
PREPARE TO DISGUISE YOURSELF AS A HAN.
PREPARE FOR WHAT?
HEY,
Going back to the temple is out of the question for now...
YOU'VE BEEN DISTRACTED EVER SINCE WE LEFT. DID YOU EVEN PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT I SAID?
OF COURSE.

It'll take at least a couple more months before LiuYun can return with any message from old man Qin.
JUST WHAT DID THE OLD IMMORTAL SAY TO YOU? YOUR FACE WAS PRETTY PALE WHEN YOU CAME OUT.
YOU BETTER NOT BE HIDING ANYTHING FROM ME.
IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
HEY!
DON'T TRY ANYTHING SILLY, DO YOU HEAR ME?!
Do I have no choice but to leave?
THE FACT THAT HE PRESCRIBED TO YOU SHOWS THAT YOU'RE NOT BEYOND HOPE.
YES...

RELAX, I'M FINE, TRULY.
AT LEAST,
THERE'S NOTHING I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHT NOW.
SISTER AH LI,
WHY AREN'T YOU WEARING YOUR VEIL?
SISTER AH LI IS HIGH-BORN, IT IS NOT PROPER FOR YOU TO APPEAR LIKE THIS.
YOU! DON'T YOU DARE TO LOOK!
SO YOU'RE WU NIANG? YOU CAN CALL ME SISTER AH BI.
HERE, A GIFT FOR YOU.
THANK YOU SISTER AH BI.
EH?
YOU WISH TO STAY WITH US FOR A WHILE?
ARE THERE ANY VACANT HOUSE?

I'M COMING WITH YOU TO CLEAN THE PLACE UP,
AND BRING AH LI'S STUFF OVER LATER.
THANK YOU BOTH.
OF COURSE,
SINCE THE PLANTING SEASON STARTED BEFORE THE HOUSES WERE COMPLETELY BUILT, THERE'S ONLY ME AND MY AUNTS LIVING THERE NOW, THE MEN ARE ALL STAYING AT THE TEMPORARY SHELTERS NEAR THE FARM.
I'LL PASS THE WORD TO THE MATRON RIGHT NOW, SHE'LL BE DELIGHTED.
SIGH...
FROM THIS ANGLE,
YOU REALLY DO LOOK LIKE A HAN.

.....
ARE YOU SAYING. .
THAT I'M INCAPABLE OF LETTING GO OF MY PRIDE?
TILL THE TRADES ARE COMPLETED
HERE, I'VE PREPARED A NEW SET
YOUR HORSE AND SABER ATTRACT TOO MUCH ATTENTION,
YOUR NAME IS NOW QIN SUN. YOU'RE THE OLD MAN'S NEPHEW WHO GREW UP BEYOND THE BORDER.
DON'T LOSE YOUR DOCUMENTS AND TRY NOT TO SPEAK WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO .
YOU'LL HAVE TO BEAR WITH THIS FOR NOW,

THEN AGAIN,
HAD THIS BEEN A FEW MONTHS AGO, I WOULD HAVE BEEN FUMING WITH RAGE BY NOW,
.....
FOR I AM THE SWORD OF THE GREAT KHAN, THE MASTER OF THE ARMY OF HAWKS, THE MOST CELEBRATED EAGLE OF THE GRASSLANDS.
AND THE GENERAL OF THE ASHINA CLAN.
BUT...
ONLY IF HE SAYS SO.
.....
IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD ON YOU FOR ALL THESE YEARS.
I STILL REMEMBER THAT YOU USED TO GET BEAT UP ALL THE TIME BACK WHEN WE WERE YOUNG. I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT WITHOUT ME PROTECTING YOU, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SURVIVE,
ONLY NOW DO I REALISE THAT I WAS THE ONE WHO NEEDED YOUR PROTECTION TO STAY ALIVE

HEY!
DON'T BE IN SUCH A HURRY TO CONSOLE ME,
I'M NOT THAT PATHETIC.
AND STOP TREATING ME LIKE A GENERAL FROM NOW ON
AH LI,
AH LI, ARE YOU HERE?
WHY HAVE YOU COME TODAY, SISTER?
I WAS ON MY WAY TO PUR-CHASE SUPPLIES, SO I THOUGHT TO DROP BY.
ARE YOU IN CHARGE OF THE TEMPLE S PURCHASES NOW?

DON'T EVEN START. TODAY, OUT OF NOWHERE,
THAT RICE MERCHANT LADY ROLLED HER EYES AT ME, AND I HADN'T EVEN DONE ANYTHING TO HER!
I'M EXHAUSTED.
YEAH, AFTER BIG SIS LEFT, IT HAS BECOME MY RESPONSIBILITY,
WELL, YOU'D GET TO VISIT LUOYANG, ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED?
LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT THAT ANYMORE
WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO COME BACK TO THE TEMPLE?
YOU DIDN'T ASK HER WHAT IT WAS ABOUT?
WHAT ABOUT IT?
I KNEW IT, YOU'RE INCREDIBLE.
AH, RIGHT.
I NOTICED THAT WU NIANG AND THE REST SET UP A TEA STAND BY THE MAIN ROAD, WAS THAT YOUR IDEA?
HAVE THE VISITORS LEFT YET?
NOPE. WHAT'RE YOU AFRAID OF? NOT LIKE THEY WOULD EVER GO NEAR THE BACKYARD ANYWAY.

SIGH...
AT LEAST WITH A PLACE TO STAY AND SETTLE DOWN, THEIR LIVES WILL GET BETTER IN THE FUTURE.
A PITY THAT SHE HAS TO WORK FROM DAY TO NIGHT WITHOUT REST AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE.
EVEN THOUGH IT JUST OPENED, MANY TRAVELERS ALREADY STOPPED BY TO REST
WU NIANG IS SUCH A SMART AND CHARMING GIRL, SHE TOTALLY LOOKED LIKE THE MISTRESS OF THE SHOP BACK THERE
Creak
WU NIANG?
YOU'RE BACK EARLY TODAY
.....

WU NIANG? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
IT...IT'S NOTHING.
LET ME SEE YOUR FACE!
I'M FINE.
YOU CALL THAT FINE!
I WAS CARELESS AND I FELL.
THAT'S OBVIOUSLY A PALMPRINT! TELL ME THE TRUTH!
IT'S.. IT'S ALL MY FAULT.
I GOT INTO AN ARGUMENT OVER SOMETHING PETTY, AND ENDED UP FIGHTING.
WAAAAH

RUBBISH! DO YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE!
TELL ME WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPANED?
XIAO JIU!
THEY WERE SAYING BAD THINGS ABOUT LIUYUN TEMPLE!
THEY WERE BAD!
PLEASE CALM DOWN.
AH LI, AH LI,

UNFORGIV-ABLE...
UNFOR-GIVABLE!!
I'M JUST AS ANGRY AS YOU ARE,
BUT DON'T...
SISTER Bi,
THE VEIL, DID YOU BRING IT WITH YOU?

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SONG OF THE LONG MARCH

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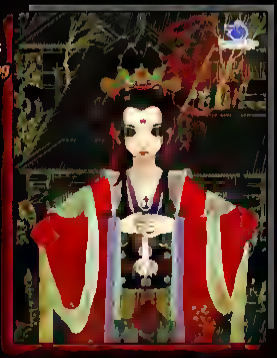

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SONG OF THE LONG MARCH

< CHAPTER 29 >

PART - I

AUTHOR: XIA DA

觀雲流
Liu Yun Temple
MISTRESS...
.....
YES.
AH LI, SHE,
THESE BADMOUTHERS WERE SPREADING FALSE RUMORS ABOUT LIU YUN TEMPLE EVERYWHERE.
THEN ESCORT THEM DOWN THE MOUNTAIN
UNTIE THEM AND MAKE SURE THAT THEIR WOUNDS ARE TREATED.

MISTRESS,
MISTRESS...
TREAT THEIR WOUNDS?
FINE., I'LL TREAT THEIR WOUNDS ALRIGHT...
AH, OWIE OUCH!
SMACK
SMACK
SMACK
SOB!
I NEVER KNEW,
THAT YOU COULD BE THIS IMPULSIVE.

YOU BEAT THEM UP IN PUBLIC JUST BECAUSE THEY SAID A COUPLE BAD THINGS ABOUT US
SO WHAT NOW, YOU'VE VENTED YOUR ANGER, AND DID OUR SITUATION IMPROVE FROM IT IN THE SLIGHTEST?
IT'S OBVIOUS THAT SOME ONE ELSE IS BEHIND ALL THIS
LUCKILY THEY WERE JUST SOME COMMON STREET THUGS IF ANY OF THEM TURNED OUT TO BE AN EXPERT MARTIAL ARTIST, HOW WOULD YOU HAVE FARED THEN?
.....
BUT THEN AGAIN, HOW COULD YOU NOT HAVE TAKEN THAT INTO ACCOUNT ALREADY?

.....
YES, YOU'VE THOUGHT OF EVERY-THING
EVERY-THING EXCEPT MY WORDS
AND KNOWING THAT AS LONG AS YOU USED YOUR AGE AS AN EXCUSE, THE MOST YOU COULD EXPECT FROM ME WAS A REPRIMAND, AM I RIGHT?
YOU WERE COUNTING ON SITU LANGLANG FOR AID INCASE YOU GOT OUTMATCHED, AND ON HIS HELP YOU COULD HAVE RESOLVED THIS MATTER FOR THE TEMPLE, WEREN'T YOU?
BUT FIRST,
WE CAN TALK ABOUT THE PROPER WAY OF HANDLING THIS LATER
WHAT MADE YOU YOU SO FURIOUS?

EVEN CUTTING OFF THEIR EARS AND TONGUES WOULD STILL NOT HAVE MADE JUSTICE!
THE FILTH THOSE SCOUNDRELS WERE SPOUTING WAS SIMPLY INTOLERABLE.
HEY, HAVE YOU HEARD? YOU KNOW, ABOUT LIUYUN TEMPLE... IS IT TRUE?
I HEARD, EVERYONE SAYS IT IS TRUE
YOU BETTER STAY AWAY FROM THAT PLACE TOO.
COULD IT HAVE BEEN A MISUNDERSTANDING? THE MISTRESS OF THE TEMPLE HARDLY SEEMS LIKE...
WHO KNOWS...
JUST THE OTHER DAY, SOME FELLOW WHO CLAIMED TO BE ONE OF HER REGULAR CUSTOMERS* SOUNDED PRETTY CONVINCING.

*TL NOTES: CUSTOMER HERE REFERS SPECIFICALLY TO THE CUSTOMER OF A PROSTITUTE

WU NIANG,
YOU SHOULD HEAD BACK.
GRANNY...
GRANNY WILL TAKE CARE OF THE STORE,
YOU GO PREPARE THE MEAL FOR YOUR MOTHER AND BROTHER.
DON'T WORRY,
WORDS ALONE CAN NOT CHANGE WHAT WAS WHITE INTO BLACK.
YOU ARE REFERRING TO
THEM SPREADING RUMORS ABOUT ME CONCEALING IMMORAL PRACTICES WITHIN THE TEMPLE.
AND SECRETLY ENGAGING IN THE ACT OF PROSTITUTION?

BUT MISTRESS!
I WAS SECRETLY GLAD WHEN YOU REQUESTED TO STAY AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN BEFORE.
THINKING THAT MAYBE, I COULD STOP WORRYING ABOUT YOU JUST THIS ONCE...
THEN AGAIN, I SUPPOSE YOU ARE NOT THE QUIET TYPE I CAN JUST FORGET ABOUT
YOU SHOULD HAVE GUESSED IT BY NOW, SOMEONE OUT THERE IS SPREADING THOSE FALSE RUMORS ON PURPOSE.
THE ONES BEHIND ALL THIS ARE FROM THE MERCHANT FACTION CALLED "CHI NI".
THEIR PAST ATTEMPTS TO ABSORB THE LIN YUN TEMPLE HAD ALL ENDED IN VAIN, HENCE THE NEED FOR THEM TO RESORT TO SUCH UNDERHANDED TACTICS.
I ALREADY HAVE COUNTER MEASURES IN PLACE,
YOU ARE NOT TO INTERFERE, UNDERSTAND?

YOU COULDN'T STOMACH THE WAY THEY SLANDERED MY NAME.
YET, YOU DON'T SEEM ALL THAT BOTHERED WHEN THEY CALLED ME BODHISATTVA OR GODDESS?
.....
I'M NONE OF THOSE.
SO WHAT DOES ALL THAT HAS TO DO WITH ME?

I KNOW ALL TOO WELL WHO AND WHAT I AM.
Hall of self diligence
MASTER SUN NEEDS NOT TO BE CONCERNED,

PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR HONEST OPINION, HOW MANY YEARS DO I HAVE LEFT?
TEN YEARS IF LUCKY, SEVEN TO EIGHT YEARS IF NOT.
IT IS ENOUGH.

TO ASSIST HIS MAJESTY IN PACIFYING THE LAND AND BRINGING HARMONY TO THE PEOPLE,
SEVEN YEARS IS ENOUGH.
THE MISTRESS DIDN'T PUNISH YOU, DID SHE?
NOPE,
THANK GOODNESS, THINKING BACK, YOU REALLY GAVE ME A FRIGHT BACK THERE.
I NEVER KNEW YOUR MARTIAL ART WAS SO GOOD.
TO THINK YOU ACTUALLY HID IT FROM ME FOR SO LONG.
I DON'T CARE, YOU GOT TO TEACH ME A FEW MOVES AT LEAST!
.....

I HAVE BEEN GROUNDED.
WHAT?
DIDN'T YOU JUST TELL ME THAT SHE DECIDED NOT TO PUNISH YOU?
IT'S NOT MUCH OF A PUNISHMENT REALLY.
SHE WANTS ME TO THINK IT THROUGH FIRST BEFORE TURNING TO THE LIUYUN TEMPLE.
ABOUT WHAT?
THANK YOU FOR THE INTRODUCTION, LORD LI.
DID YOU MAKE ANY HEADWAY ON THAT CASE YOU'RE INVESTIGATING IN LUOYANG?
LORD DU, YOU ARE TOO COURTEOUS
BEN XIN*,

T/N: NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THIS BUBBLE IS TALKING ABOUT

SHE WANTS ME TO UNDERSTAND MY HEART.
HMM... I DON'T REALLY GET IT.
SO HAVE YOU FIGURED IT OUT THEN?
NOPE.
THE MERCHANT CONVOY INVOLVED HAS BEEN MORE OR LESS IDENTIFIED,
I'M JUST WAITING FOR THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT BEFORE I STRIKE.

INDEED,
WAS THAT ALSO WITHIN YOUR CALCULATIONS?
LORD DU, YOU JEST. I ONLY HEARD OF THAT CONVOY BY CHANCE,
...NEVER MIND,
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN TIGHT-LIPPED ANYWAY.
IS THE CONVOY KNOWN AS THE "CHI NI"?
SIGH,
AFTER ALL THAT EXPLAINING I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND.
DOES IT MEAN SOMETHING LIKE "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO THE MOST"?
...THAT IS ONE WAY OF SAYING IT.
AH LI, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT TO DO THE MOST?
.....
SISTER BI, WHAT ABOUT YOU?

I SUPPOSE... THAT I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN EVERYTHING I CAN ON THE ARTS OF MEDICINE FROM THE MISTRESS AND BIG SIS.
AND JUST LIKE THEM, I WILL LIVE A LIFE OF MY OWN CHOOSING.
I WILL ALSO TAKE GOOD CARE OF LIUYUN TEMPLE. MAYBE OPEN UP SOME MORE FARM LAND, AND EVEN BUY A NEW COW...
HOLD ON A SECOND! WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT ME?
SO WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT TO DO?
NOW YOU'VE GOT ME CURIOUS,
THE MISTRESS AND YOU ARE BOTH THE SMART ONES, WHY DO THE TWO OF YOU TROUBLE YOURSELVES OVER SUCH A TRIVIAL MATTER?
YOU GUYS MUST HAVE TOO MANY THINGS YOU WANT TO DO.
AH, I GET IT.

SIGH..
BRO, DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE HERE LOOKING FOR A DISCIPLE AS WELL?
EVEN SO YOU'LL HAVE TO GET IN LINE FIRST.

.....
I WILL GET IT FOR YOU.
IS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR YOU WOULD LIKE TO EAT?

SISTER SI,
I REMEMBER SEEING A POT STILL COOKING ON THE KITCHEN STOVE WHEN I LEFT.
WAS IT YOURS?
WHAT?! SHIT!
I WILL RUN BACK AND CHECK!
JUST BE CAREFUL ON YOUR WAY BACK!
ELDER,
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WISH TO SPEAK WITH ME ABOUT?

IF ELDER WISHED TO REMAIN HIDDEN,
HOW COULD I HAVE DETECTED YOUR PRESENCE?
OH? WHY DO YOU ASK?
SIGH...
MY DEAR DISCIPLE, ARE YOU REALLY UNWILLING TO LEAVE THIS PLACE WITH ME?
THOUGH I, YOUR MASTER DONT REALLY MIND.
BUT AREN'T YOU, MY DEAR DISCIPLE JUST A BIT TOO CAPABLE?
EVEN THE MEN FROM THE IMPERIAL COURT HAVE SET THEIR EYES ON YOU.

YOUR LOUSY SKILLS ARE NO MATCH FOR THEM.
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND INTENTIONS, BUT I WILL FIND A WAY TO DEAL WITH THIS MYSELF.
AS TO YOUR OFFER TO TRAVEL WITH YOU AS YOUR DISCIPLE, UNFORTUNATELY I WILL HAVE TO DECLINE, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
.....
MY DEAR DISCIPLE,
LET'S HAVE A WAGER.
I, YOUR MASTER WON'T BE LEAVING FOR ANOTHER TEN DAYS.
THERE'S A TOTAL OF EIGHTEEN STANCES IN THIS SWORD MANUAL.

BETWEEN NOW AND MY DEPARTURE FROM LUO YANG,
I WILL TAKE CARE OF ONE PERSON FOR EVERY STANCE YOU MASTER FROM THIS MANUAL, WHAT DO YOU SAY?
CI BA
PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT! THE OLD MAN PROMISED GOOD FOOD AND DRINKS FOR US AFTERWARDS!
YEAH!
YOU GUYS SURE BROUGHT IN A GOOD HAUL THIS TIME AROUND
HAHA, THAT'S TRUE
EVERYONE WILL GET HIS SHARE!

WELL... WELCOME TO CI BA,
WE'LL REST HERE BEFORE WE CONTINUE SOUTH INTO THE GREAT TANG.
FOR HOW LONG?
WE'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS OUR SCOUTS RETURN.
ALSO, I HAVE ENTRUSTED THOSE CLOSEST TO ME WITH THE SECRET OF YOUR IDENTITY,
I'LL INTRO-DUCE THEM TO YOU LATER... HOWEVER, THERE MIGHT BE A SMALL COMPLICATION

SONG OF THE LONG MARCH

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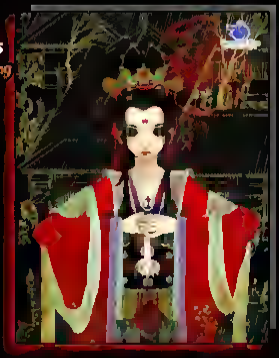

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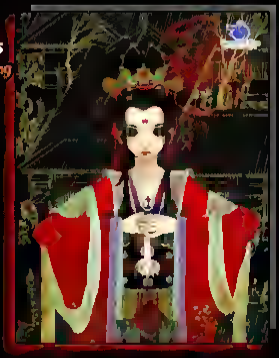

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SONG OF THE LONG MARCH

< CHAPTER 30 >

PART - I

AUTHOR: XIA DA

ALL THOSE PRESENT HERE ARE THE TOP FIGHTERS FROM THE "YAN HANG MEN".
JUST A YEAR AGO, THEY WERE STILL THE PERSONAL RETAINERS OF LORD SUN, THE FORMER GOVERNER OF SHUO PROVINCE

IF YOU INTEND TO TAKE THE MERCHANT ROUTE INTO KHITAN AFTER THIS IS SETTLED, THESE ARE THE PEOPLE YOU'LL BE IN DAILY CONTACT WITH.
WE MIGHT AS WELL USE THIS CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.
.....
I'M GETTING OLD,
SO I WON'T GET IN YOUR YOUNG ONE'S WAY HAVING FUN.

ON THE BATTLE-FIELD,
I ALWAYS WIN FAIR AND SQUARE.
SO IF YOU'RE NOT SA-TISFIED,

JUST BRING IT ON!
CRASH!
THUMP!
CRASH!
THUMP!
CLANG!
THUMP!
SMACK!
SMACK!

FIND US A CARPENTER TOMORROW.
SURE.
OLD MASTER...
CRASH!
THUMP!
CRASH!
IF YOU WERE SIMPLY TO GIVE WORD, NO ONE WOULD HAVE DARED TO MAKE A MOVE.
OLD MASTER, EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE HAS SOME GRUDGE AGAINST HIM,
THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY WOULD JUST ACCEPT HIM.

EVEN IF WE MANAGE TO GET HIM INTO KHITAN HE WILL NOT SURVIVE FOR LONG.
IF HE CAN'T DEAL WITH THIS KIND OF TRIVIAL MATTER ON HIS OWN,
I MAKE IT MY HABIT TO NEVER INVEST IN DEALS WITH NO RETURNS.
HMM...
SMACK!
CRASH!
I'LL BE DAMNED IF ANYTHING GOOD COMES OUT OF THIS.
LUO YANG

.....
DUE TO INTERFERENCE BY THE MEDICINE KING'S COMPANION, SITU LANGLANG, I WAS NOT ABLE TO GET A CLEAR ENOUGH LOOK.
BUT JUDGING FROM HER VOICE AND BUILD, I'M EIGHTY PERCENT CERTAIN THAT SHE'S THE SAME PERSON I SAW IN SHUO PROVINCE.
DID YOU HAVE A GOOD LOOK AT HER? ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT IT WAS PRINCESS YONG NING YOU SAW?
SHALL I GO AGAIN AND..
IT IS HIS MAJESTY'S WISH FOR THE MEDICINE KING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COURT AFFAIRS, WE CANNOT LET SOMETHING LIKE THIS TURN HIM AGAINST US.
STAY PUT FOR NOW, WE HAVE YET TO GRASP WHAT MASTER SUN'S INTENTIONS ARE.
BUT IF MASTER SUN CAN KEEP HER AT HIS SIDE AND THUS KEEP HER AWAY FROM CAUSING TROUBLE... IT WOULD PUT MY MIND AT EASE..
HAO DOU,
MASTER SUN WILL LEAVE LUO YANG IN TEN DAYS TIME, MAKE SURE TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM.

YES.
WHAT ABOUT THE SURVEILLANCE AND CAPTURE OPERATIONS OF CHI NI...?
THERE'S NO RUSH..
DIDN'T YOU UNCOVER EARLIER THAT THEIR NEXT TARGET IS THE LIU YUN TEMPLE?
THEN WE'LL LET THEM TEST THE WATERS FOR US.
YES, MY LORD

DAMN IT,
THAT DAMN BARBARIAN SURE IS TOUGH,
I... I'VE TRASHED THAT BASTARD!
TRASHED MY ASS!

JUST STOP, WE ARE DONE.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF FIGHTING NOW?
SOB...
MY LORD!
.....
...IF WE WERE REALLY THAT GOOD AT FIGHTING, WHY WOULD LORD SUN BEHEAD HIMSELF?
CRASH!

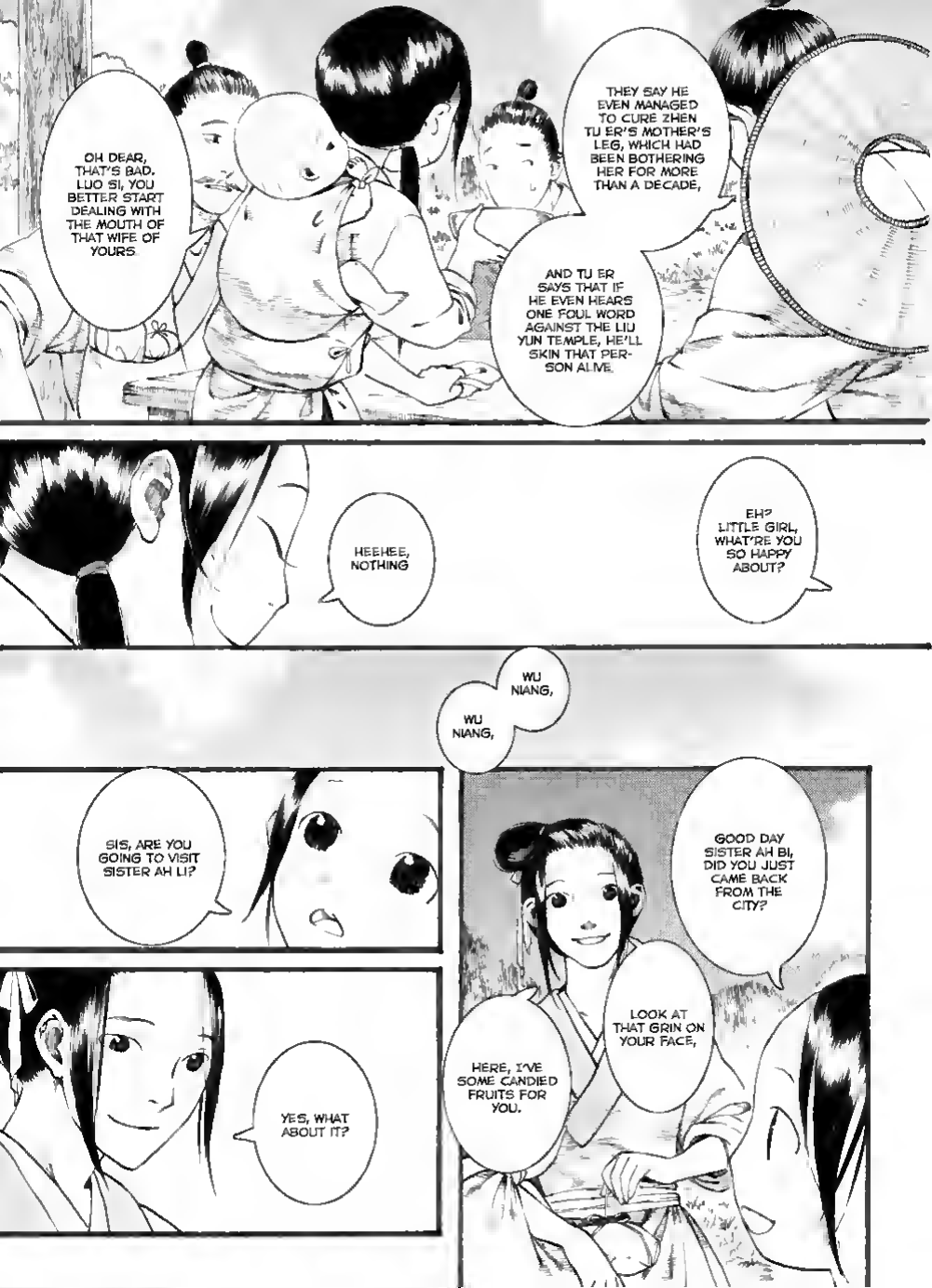
GONG SUN HENG WAS A HERO.
GULP
GULP
GULP
YOU DON'T KNOW SHIT!
OF COURSE I DONT.
I CAN ONLY BE ENVIOUS.

THAT ALL OF YOU WOULD GLADLY GIVE YOUR LIVES FOR HIM.
IT WAS WORTH IT.
.....
IF YOU'RE DONE LOOKING THEN GO DOWN AND CLEAN THE PLACE UP.
OLD MASTER,
IT SHOULD BE OVER BY NOW
DID THEY HIT THEMSELVES ON THE HEAD?
THESE GUYS...

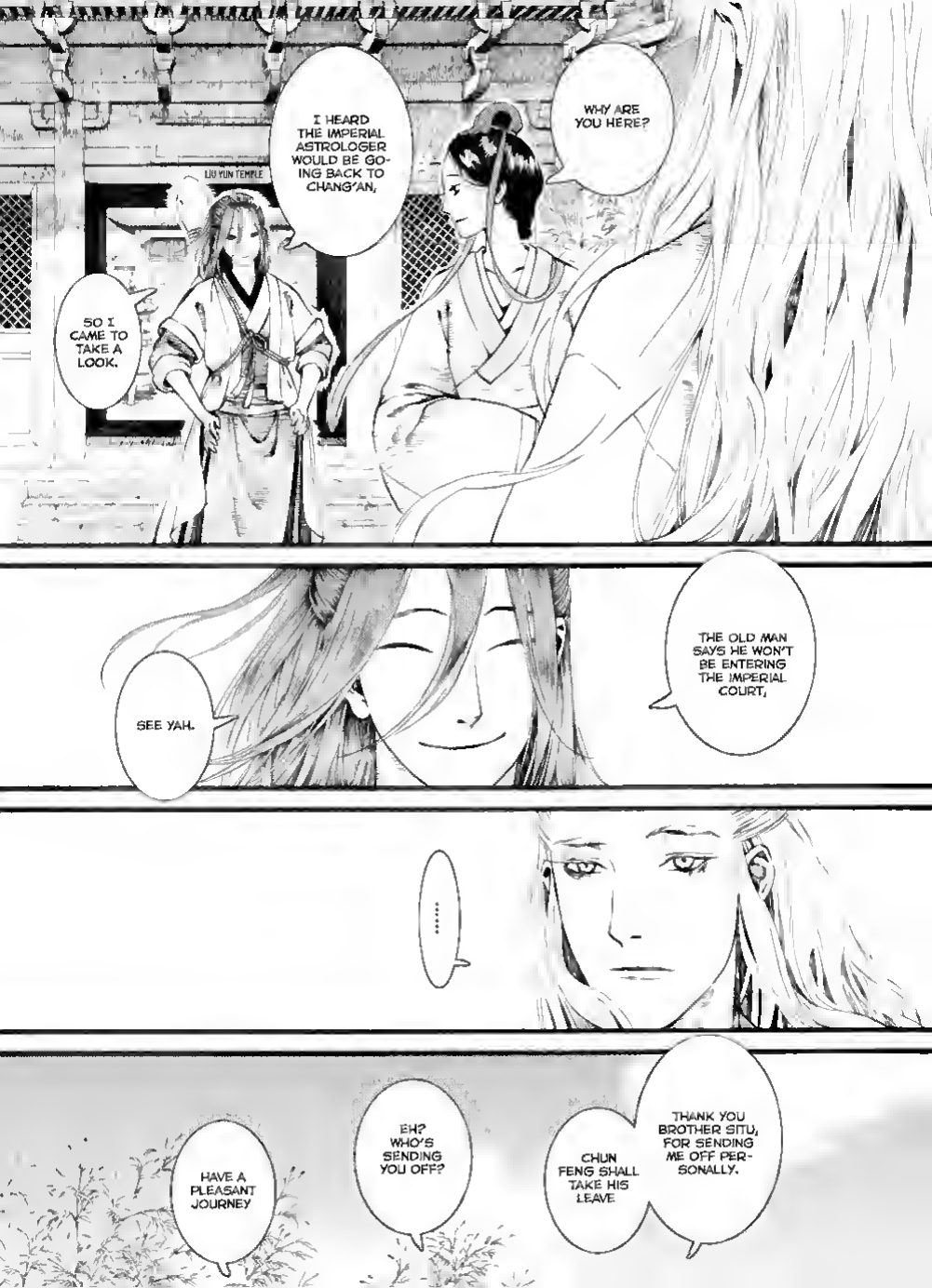
SOB
SOB
SOB
SOB
GULP
GULP
GULP
GULP
#@○…
*@■□
…
(Probably something vulgar)
HAVE YOU GATHERED ALL THE INTEL?
YES, LIU YUN TEMPLE IS SITUATED AT THE EAST OF LUOYANG.
THEY HAVE INDEED BROUGHT BACK WOMEN FROM ASHINA SUN'S TERRITORY.

WHILE LUO SHI BA AND I WERE LOOKING FOR THE WHEREABOUTS OF LIU YUN TEMPLE, IT WOULD SEEM THAT THEY ON THE OTHER HAND WERE SEARCHING FOR "YAN HENG MEN".
SOMETHING STRANGE?
THAT WAS NOT ALL, SOMETHING STRANGE CAME UP
BUT BEFORE WE COULD MAKE CONTACT, CHI NI HAD ALREADY ATTACKED.
BY THE TIME WE FOUND THEM, ONLY THE WOMAN LEADING THE CONVOY WAS STILL ALIVE. EVEN NOW AS WE SPEAK, SHE IS STILL UNCONSCIOUS FROM HER INJURIES.
LUO SHI BA IS TAKING CARE OF HER IN SHI MEN TOWN, I CAME AHEAD TO DELIVER MY REPORT.
T/N: JUST A REMINDER, YAN HANG MEN MEANS BAND OF THE FLYING GOOSE
I FEAR THIS MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR YOUNG MASTER.
BUT WHY WOULD LIU YUN TEMPLE BE SEARCHING FOR YAN HANG MEN*?
...I HAVE KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT CHI NI HAD ITS EYES ON LIU YUN TEMPLE,
YES SIR!
WAKE EVERYONE UP AND GET THE HORSES READY, WE LEAVE AT ONCE.

IF THAT LADY HASN'T REGAINED HER CONSCIOUSNESS BY THE TIME WE REACH SHI MEN TOWN, THEN TELL LUO SHI BA TO KEEP TAKING CARE OF HER. WE WILL HEAD STRAIGHT FOR LUOYANG.
CHI NI IS ALSO IN LUO-YANG...
MY HEART IS TROUBLED, I'M AFRAID THAT SOMETHING BAD IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
EH, HAVE YOU GUYS HEARD?
YEAH, YOU GUYS DIDN'T KNOW? I HEARD THAT THE OLD IM-MORTAL LIVING IN THE TEMPLE CALLED THE MEDICINE KING IS THE MASTER OF TEMPLE'S MISTRESS!
THE WAY THEY TREAT THEIR PATIENTS FREE OF CHARGE PROBABLY GOT IN THE WAY OF SOME-ONE ELSE'S FORTUNE.
WHICH LEAD TO ALL THE SLAN-DERING.
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO BELIEVE EVERYTHING THEY SAY ON THE STREETS.
OH? REALLY?
YOU KNOW, THOSE RUMORS ABOUT THE LIU YUN TEMPLE THAT PUT EVERYONE IN AN UPROAR A WHILE AGO.
APPARANTLY THEY WERE ALL FABRICATED.


OH DEAR, THAT'S BAD. LUO SI, YOU BETTER START DEALING WITH THE MOUTH OF THAT WIFE OF YOURS.
THEY SAY HE EVEN MANAGED TO CURE ZHEN TU ER'S MOTHER'S LEG, WHICH HAD BEEN BOTHERING HER FOR MORE THAN A DECADE,
AND TU ER SAYS THAT IF HE EVEN HEARS ONE FOUL WORD AGAINST THE LIU YUN TEMPLE, HE'LL SKIN THAT PERSON ALIVE.
HEEHEE, NOTHING
EH? LITTLE GIRL, WHAT'RE YOU SO HAPPY ABOUT?
WU NIANG,
WU NIANG,
SIS, ARE YOU GOING TO VISIT SISTER AH LI?
YES, WHAT ABOUT IT?
GOOD DAY SISTER AH BI, DID YOU JUST CAME BACK FROM THE CITY?
LOOK AT THAT GRIN ON YOUR FACE,
HERE, I'VE SOME CANDIED FRUITS FOR YOU.

SISTER AH LI HAS SHUT HERSELF IN HER ROOM EVER SINCE SHE CAME BACK LAST TIME.
SHE WON'T SEE ANYONE. IT'S ALREADY BEEN THREE DAYS.
WHAT? SURELY THAT GOES BEYOND THE MEANING OF BEING GROUNDED?
PRIEST-ESS, PLEASE HALT YOUR STEPS.
MY HEART IS ALREADY BURDENED BY THE GUILT FOR HAVING STAYED SO LONG,
HOW COULD I BEAR THE THOUGHT OF YOU SENDING ME OFF PER-SONALLY.
YOU'RE AWFULLY COURTEOUS TODAY.
FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, THE TROUBLES OF THE TEMPLE MUST HAVE BEEN RESOLVED. IF SO, PLEASE CONVEY MY FAREWELL TO THE MEDICINE KING AS WELL.
I HOPE I DIDN'T CAUSE THE ELDER TOO MUCH TROUBLE THIS TIME.
THE ELDER SAYS THAT SAV-ING PEOPLE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HIS WISH, THERE'S NO NEED TO BLAME YOURSELF.


LIU YUN TEMPLE
I HEARD THE IMPERIAL ASTROLOGER WOULD BE GOING BACK TO CHANG'AN,
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
SO I CAME TO TAKE A LOOK.
THE OLD MAN SAYS HE WON'T BE ENTERING THE IMPERIAL COURT,
SEE YAH.
.....
THANK YOU BROTHER SITU, FOR SENDING ME OFF PERSONALLY.
CHUN FENG SHALL TAKE HIS LEAVE
EH? WHO'S SENDING YOU OFF?
HAVE A PLEASANT JOURNEY

TEMPERING JUSTICE WITH MERCY, MIXING TRUTH WITH FALSEHOOD YOUR METHODS ARE WAY MORE CLEVER THAN THAT OF CHI NI'S.
IT ONLY TOOK THREE DAYS FOR THE RUMORS TO START SPINNING IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING I'M PROUD OF, BUT THE SITUATION DEMANDED DRASTIC RESPONSES.
IF YOU ASK ME... WHY GO THROUGH ALL THAT TROUBLE?
CRUSHING THEM WOULD BE AS SIMPLE AS CRUSHING AN ANNOYING INSECT.
YOU ARE NOT TO INTERFERE.
SINCE THE IMPERIAL COURT IS NOW INVOLVED, WE'LL SIMPLY LET THEM HANDLE IT.
THE ONES I'M WORRIED ABOUT IS QUAN NIANG AND HER PEOPLE TRAVELING THE MERCHANT ROUTE...
I WISH I KNEW IF THEY ARE OKAY.

URGH...
YOU...
YOU ARE... ?
THE YAN HANG MEN YOU WERE LOOKING FOR.
LUO SHI BA.

AH... WAS IT YOU WHO SAVED ME?
I AM QUAN NIANG FROM THE LIU YUN TEMPLE, OUR CONVOY WAS AMBUSHED, NOT SURE BY WHOM.
THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME.
EH?
OUCH!!
DON'T MOVE, OR YOU'LL RE-OPEN YOUR WOUNDS.
URG.
CAN I ASK IF YOU KNOW A YOUNG GIRL BY THE NAME OF AH LI?
SHE HAS ENTRUSTED ME WITH A LETTER TO DELIVER TO YAN HANG MEN.
CHI NI WAS THE ONE WHO AMBUSHED YOU
AS FOR AH LI, SHE MAY BE MY MASTER.

AH LI, OPEN UP.
I BROUGHT YOU SOME FOOD.
KNOCK
AH LI,
KNOCK
KNOCK
CREAK
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS?!
EH?
THE RUMORS ABOUT THE LIU YUN TEMPLE HAVE FINALLY SUBSIDED.
YOU CAN STOP WORRYING ABOUT THAT.

THAT LI CHUN FENG FELLOW HAS ALREADY LEFT,
MEDICINE KING AND SITU LANGLANG ARE STILL AT THE TEMPLE THOUGH.
WHEN ARE YOU COMING BACK?
WHAT ABOUT THAT "MY HEART" THING... HAVE YOU FIGURED IT OUT YET?
NOT FOR NOW.
I'LL SOON RETURN TO THE TEMPLE.
SISTER BI, YOU SHOULD HEAD BACK FIRST

...That I can't even master a single stance.

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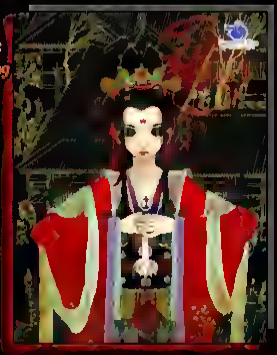

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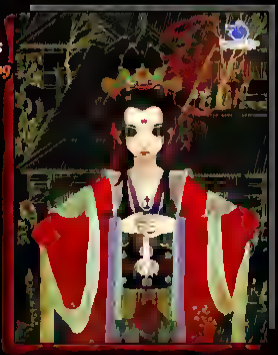

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